

## Portland State University PDXScholar

---

Dissertations and Theses

Dissertations and Theses

---


1990

# Nietzsche's "woman" : a metaphor without brakes

Kathleen Merrow  
*Portland State University*

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Follow this and additional works at: [https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/open\\_access\\_etds](https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/open_access_etds)

 Part of the [Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Commons](#), [Intellectual History Commons](#), and the [Philosophy Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Merrow, Kathleen, "Nietzsche's "woman" : a metaphor without brakes" (1990). *Dissertations and Theses*. Paper 4099.

[10.15760/etd.S983](https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/open_access_etds/10.15760/etd.S983)

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations and Theses by an authorized administrator of PDXScholar. For more information, please contact [pdxscholar@pdx.edu](mailto:pdxscholar@pdx.edu).

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF Kathleen Merrow for the Master  
of Arts in History presented June 18, 1990.

Title: Nietzsche's "Woman": A Metaphor Without Brakes

APPROVED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE THESIS COMMITTEE:

[REDACTED]  
Michael Bearden, Chair

[REDACTED]  
Susan C. Karant-Nunn

[REDACTED]  
Franklin C. West

[REDACTED]  
Johanna Brenner

This thesis reconsiders the generally held view that Friedrich Nietzsche's works are misogynist. In doing so it provides an interpretation of Nietzsche's texts with respect to the metaphor "woman," sets this interpretation into an historical context of Nietzsche reception and follows the extension of Nietzsche's metaphor "woman" into French feminist theory. It provides an interpretation that shows that a misogynist reading of Nietzsche is in error because

such a reading fails to consider the multiple perspectives that operate in Nietzsche's texts.

Nietzsche's metaphors of "woman" -- far from being misogynist -- reveal a positive, affirmative "woman." His use of this metaphor radically dislocates traditional conceptions of the relationship masculine/feminine as it dislocates the "truth" of metaphysics. I argue that the metaphor "woman" is central to Nietzsche's attack on traditional philosophy and notions of truth.

Once "woman" is disentangled from notions of misogyny, I turn to a study of how Nietzsche has been interpreted from his own time to the present, paying attention to the point at which the "woman" in Nietzsche's texts acquires a significance and how this metaphor has (or has not) been read by Nietzsche's major interpreters. Given that the range of Nietzsche reception is very broad, extending through literature, social thought, politics, psychology, and philosophy, I have chosen to focus on Nietzsche's major philosophical readers, beginning with Nietzsche's own time and running through Heidegger and Derrida. This enables me to set my own interpretation within a context of Nietzsche reading.

The last major chapter examines the relationship between Nietzsche and the major texts of French feminist criticism. My concern here is with the extension of Nietzsche's strategy of "woman" to radical feminist theory

in the valorization of "woman" as difference and otherness and the use of this valorization to attack the patriarchal structure and history of language and thought. For these theoretical writers who would deconstruct even sexual identity, "woman" still functions in the Nietzschean sense in which she is no longer the opposite of man but the very subversion of the opposition masculinity/femininity.

NIETZSCHE'S "WOMAN":  
A METAPHOR WITHOUT BRAKES

by  
KATHLEEN MERROW

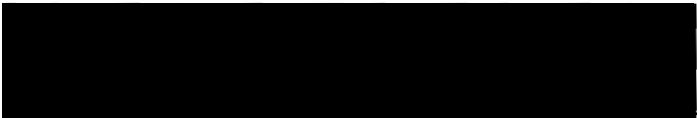
A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS  
in  
HISTORY

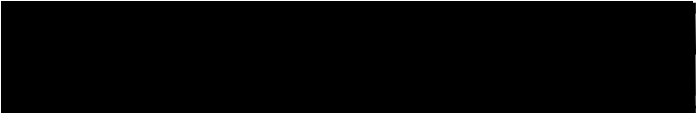
Portland State University  
1990

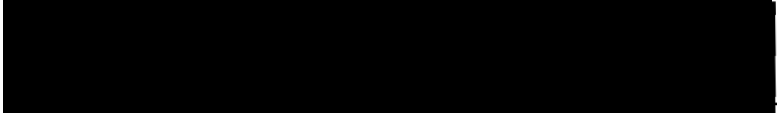
TO THE OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES:

The members of the Committee approve the thesis of  
Kathleen Merrow presented June 18, 1990.

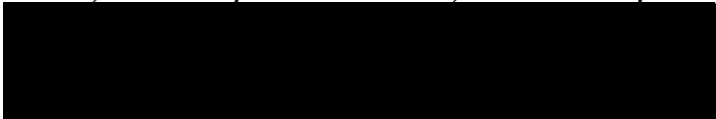
  
Michael Reardon, Chair

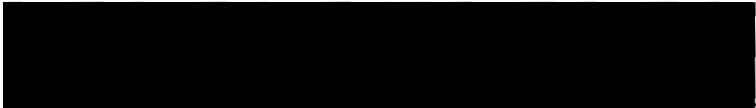
  
Susan C. Karant-Nunn

  
Franklin C. West

  
Johanna Brenner

APPROVED:

  
Bernard V. Burke, Chair, Department of History

  
C. William Savery, Interim Vice Provost for Graduate  
Studies and Research

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER	
I    THE WOMAN IN NIETZSCHE'S TEXTS: AN INTERPRETATION.....	9
II   ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF NIETZSCHE INTERPRETATION.....	47
III  FROM METAPHOR TO THEORY.....	84
CONCLUSION.....	107
WORKS CITED.....	110

## INTRODUCTION

The writings of the enigmatic philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche have been subject to numerous, frequently conflicting interpretations during the one hundred years since he stopped writing, victim to a madness many believed symbolic of the radicalness of his thought. It is the very complex nature of this thought that has produced so many different views and different "Nietzsches." Even now, one commonplace of commentary on Nietzsche is that he was/is a misogynist however much significance is accorded his contributions to the thought of the twentieth century. Nietzsche's famous remark "You are going to women? Do not forget the whip!" is frequently cited in evidence of this misogyny.<sup>1</sup> It is part of my purpose to show how this reading of Nietzsche is the mistaken result of failing to take account of the multiple perspectives that operate in his works. There is no other way to show that the label misogyny does not apply to Nietzsche than to provide an interpretation of Nietzsche's texts that follows his use of the metaphor "woman" and his remarks on women. The riddle posed by "woman" plays a very significant role in Nietzsche's thought. Those readers who pay attention to this

---

<sup>1</sup> Nietzsche, Thus Spoke Zarathustra, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Penguin, 1978) 67.



riddle, following Ariadne's thread through the labyrinthine structure of Nietzsche's writing, will discover therein a positive, affirmative "woman," one that radically dislocates traditional conceptions of the relationship masculine/feminine as it dislocates the "truth" of metaphysics. The question of Woman is posed in the first chapter of this thesis.

Once "woman" is disentangled from notions of misogyny, I turn to a study of how Nietzsche has been interpreted from his own time to the present, paying attention to the point at which the "woman" in Nietzsche's texts acquires a special significance and how this metaphor has (or has not) been read by Nietzsche's major interpreters. I situate my own reading of Nietzsche in this context as a particular kind of interpretation. Previously, whether Nietzsche was labeled misogynist or not, his remarks on women were not believed to be important enough to be taken seriously philosophically. They could be ignored or dismissed, while his readers took on the explication of his "real" philosophy. The literary aspects of Nietzsche's texts were separated from his philosophical arguments. However, in French intellectual thought during the late 1960s and the 1970s the deconstructive nature of Nietzsche's texts as a kind of writing acquired significance within the structuralist/poststructuralist debate over writing and the extension of this debate to the philosophical tradition by

Derrida.<sup>2</sup> The literary nature of philosophical writing as writing was now taken seriously (or philosophy was taken more playfully) and the separation between philosophy and literature rejected.

In the context of this debate "woman" becomes a metaphor without brakes, proliferating in the texts of postmodernism as a Nietzschean valorization of the feminine as alterity and difference over the metaphysical concepts of identity and sameness. The last major chapter of this thesis deals with this process of valorization, particularly with the relationship between Nietzsche and the major texts of French feminist criticism -- the extension of Nietzsche's strategy of "woman" to a type of radical feminist theory. Thus my thesis provides both an interpretation and a reception history as the context for this interpretation and its extension to new debates.

The use of the term "postmodernism" requires some explanation. Jean-Francois Lyotard defines the postmodern as "incredulity toward metanarrative."<sup>3</sup> This can be expanded by saying that the difference between the modern and the postmodern is a difference in the status of the story --

---

<sup>2</sup> Rajchman, Michel Foucault: The Freedom of Philosophy, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985) 11.

<sup>3</sup> Lyotard, The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge, trans. Geof Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989) xxiv.

historical, literary, scientific, or philosophical. Modernist writers tend to believe and write as if a story could still be told in the form of a comprehensive narrative in which meaning has a unity as a whole and in which the identity, grammar, and vocabulary of literary language are assumed given. In postmodernist writing such conventions are abandoned, or if retained, then retained as arbitrary academic forms. Form and artifice no longer give solace. Meaning is multiple, no story privileged, nothing has explanatory power.<sup>4</sup> Throughout this thesis the words "theory," "form," "nature," "is," "represents," and other similar words are used. Given a certain academic form and approach that must be followed, these words are useful and unavoidable, yet under postmodern assumptions they cannot be used without irony. This must be kept in mind, particularly when the "object" of study is a group of texts bearing the signature "Nietzsche." In postmodernism (sometimes referred to as modernity) legitimation -- of theory, fact, knowledge -- has become "visible as a problem." Nietzsche fore-tells this twentieth century crisis of representation.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Lyotard 71-82.

<sup>5</sup> By representation is meant "an essentially realistic epistemology, which conceives of representation as the reproduction, for subjectivity, of an objectivity that lies outside it, [and] projects a mirror theory of knowledge and art, whose fundamental evaluative categories are those of adequacy, accuracy, and Truth itself" (Jameson, "Foreword," to Lyotard's The Postmodern Condition viii).

At the end of the nineteenth century Nietzsche termed the first manifestation of this crisis Nihilism. In Nietzsche's time this appeared as a general cultural dislocation in a period of great social, political, and cultural change in Germany and elsewhere. Nietzsche was a severe critic of the products of these changes -- German nationalism, anti-semitism, industrialism and the development of middle class values, philosophical pessimism, cultural decline, and sterility. Culture was widely believed to be shallow and decadent.<sup>6</sup> But even more so he was a critic of the rise of positivistic science and scientism in the second half of the nineteenth century to the status of near religious faith.<sup>7</sup> This scientism accompanied a loss of religious faith on the part of many.<sup>8</sup> Nietzsche repudiates both the Christian religion and the faith in science as symptoms of the same problem -- the devaluation of this world for (an)other world, a beyond posited on God/Truth/Reason which could provide the truths and certainty lacking to our immediate senses and provide man a false sense of comfort in his ability to "know."

---

<sup>6</sup> Hajo Holborn, A History of Modern Germany: 1840-1945 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969) 393; Henri F. Ellenberger, The Discovery of the Unconscious (New York: Basic Books, 1970) 281.

<sup>7</sup> Ellenberger 226.

<sup>8</sup> Holborn 121.

Nietzsche's contemporaries emphasized the polemical aspects of his works -- his attacks on culture, morality, religion, and science.<sup>9</sup> However, it is not Nietzsche's cultural criticisms that are important here, nor his relationship to his philosophical peers and predecessors, but his diagnosis of nihilism as the most pervasive problem of his/our time. Nihilism here refers to the loss of eternal standards encompassed in Nietzsche's statement that "God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him."<sup>10</sup> The loss had occurred and, Nietzsche argued, could not be recovered by traditional means. Nietzsche, more than his contemporaries, discerned the future significance of this loss of values and meaning. As he says further in the parable of the madman:

I have come too early ... my time is not yet. This tremendous event is still on its way, still wandering; it has not yet reached the ears of men. Lightening and thunder require time; the light of the stars requires time; deeds, though done, still require time to be seen and heard. This deed is still more distant from them than the most distant stars -- and yet they have done it themselves.<sup>11</sup>

The search for Truth has undermined itself by a process of internal erosion, even if this erosion had, in Nietzsche's

---

<sup>9</sup> Ellenberger 272.

<sup>10</sup> Nietzsche, The Gay Science, trans. Kaufmann (New York: Random House, 1974) §125; Allan Megill, Prophets of Extremity: Nietzsche, Heidegger, Foucault, and Derrida (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1985) xiii.

<sup>11</sup> Nietzsche, The Gay Science §125.

time, not reached the surface or affected the faith in science. The distant thunder that Nietzsche had the ears to hear has become close and loud in the twentieth century.

Nietzsche's great problem, as Walter Kaufmann has put it, is

to escape nihilism -- which seems involved both in asserting the existence of God and thus robbing this world of ultimate significance, and also denying God and thus robbing everything of meaning and value...<sup>12</sup>

What new story can be told to affirm life and human meaning when there are no meanings and patterns in existence itself? Nietzsche moves away from Schopenhauerian pessimism toward "a justification of life, even at its most terrible, ambiguous, and mendacious."<sup>13</sup> How does one restore the mythic element to a culture that has become "analytical and inartistic?"<sup>14</sup> The affirmation of new values requires the willingness to question all values up until now. Nietzsche will revalue -- or reinterpret -- the very idea of truth, rejecting metaphysics and the mediation of things through concepts. Nietzsche was not alone in the nineteenth century in criticizing the idea that concepts do not mediate things

---

<sup>12</sup> Walter Kaufmann, Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974) 101.

<sup>13</sup> Nietzsche, The Will to Power trans. Kaufmann and Hollingdale (New York: Vintage, 1968) §1005; Megill 43.

<sup>14</sup> Megill 78.

and that no immediate knowledge of the world is possible.<sup>15</sup> However, where others attempted to find new possibilities for mediation, Nietzsche would reject mediation altogether and argue for the metaphorical nature of thought, language, and truth -- truth as illusion, as a process of interpretation that goes all the way down. The recognition that truth is a matter of interpretation opens the way to a new creativity --

At long last the horizon appears free to us  
again ... the sea, our sea, lies open again;  
perhaps there has never yet been such an  
"open sea."<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> McGill 47.

<sup>16</sup> Nietzsche, The Gay Science §343.

## CHAPTER I

### THE WOMAN IN NIETZSCHE'S TEXTS: AN INTERPRETATION

Supposing truth is a woman -- what then? Are there not grounds for the suspicion that all philosophers, insofar as they were dogmatists, have been very inexperienced about women? That the gruesome seriousness, the clumsy obtrusiveness with which they have usually approached truth so far have been awkward and very improper methods for winning a woman's heart? What is certain is that she has not allowed herself to be won -- and today every kind of dogmatism is left standing dispirited and discouraged. If it is left standing at all!

Friedrich Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil

Truth, Wisdom, Eternity, Ideality, Philosophy, Beauty ... have been woman since the time of the Greeks. Nietzsche's use of this metaphorical "woman" should not surprise anyone, except for the unusual, paradoxical twists he gives her. Nietzsche's use of this and other commentary on "woman" and her metaphorical presence within philosophical texts serves to question the traditional philosophical meaning given to concepts like truth, and constitutes a major part of his attack on traditional philosophy. Although we can only interpret these metaphors through carefully reading other sentences in Nietzsche's texts that use the same words and following the different



descriptions and values given them, we can not add up the various ways in which these words are used and arrive at "a" single meaning. In examining their role within Nietzsche's texts I shall begin with a consideration of these metaphors, as they appear in Nietzsche's texts and as they embody his major themes, not, however, as if they are mere figurative decoration for underlying concepts, but in their own right.

In interpreting Nietzsche's writing it is important never to take any individual remark out of its context. One can easily argue the case for Nietzsche the misogynist by reading only his seemingly more offensive statements literally or argue the case for a "feminist" Nietzsche by emphasizing only the positive statements. This is not the simpleminded mistake that it at first seems, because Nietzsche's texts are ambiguous and the contexts that can be applied to his metaphors multiple. The theme of "woman" in Nietzsche's texts is intimately bound up with what is called his perspectivism, his metaphor of the will to power as the basis of all life, and the affirmation of life as will to power given in the eternal return and the self-overcoming of the overman.<sup>1</sup> If Nietzsche's remarks about "woman" must be taken together and read within the larger context of his complete writings and interpreted according to his major themes, then the only way to arrive at any assessment of what (if anything) the metaphors "truth is a woman" or "life

---

<sup>1</sup> Kaufmann 307-333.

is a woman" might mean is to begin with one of these themes and work through them. One point of entry into Nietzsche's interpretation is the quotation that begins this chapter, the opening statement from the Preface to Beyond Good and Evil. Before any meaning can be assigned to "woman" in the Nietzschean phrase "truth is a woman," the question of truth must be asked.

The context that immediately presents itself is that truth is to be reconsidered as something other than what the dogmatists have believed it to be -- that is, facts and concepts that correspond to and represent the world as provided by reason through the use of logic. Why "woman?" In Nietzsche's texts woman is characterized by appearance:

But she does not want truth: what is truth to woman? From the beginning, nothing has been more alien, repugnant, and hostile to woman than truth -- her great art is the lie, her highest concern is mere appearance and beauty. Let us men confess it: we honor and love precisely this art and this instinct in woman -- we who have a hard time and for our relief like to associate with beings under whose hands, eyes, and tender follies our seriousness, our gravity and profundity almost appear to us like folly.<sup>2</sup>

Woman is truth, but truth that is paradoxically a "lie," not truth that is "true" and therefore hostile. Nietzsche speaks of lying in his essay On Truth and Lying in an Extra Moral Sense, saying that "truths are illusions

<sup>2</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage books, 1966) § 232.

about which it has been forgotten that they are illusions," a metaphorical process that begins with perception itself.<sup>3</sup> In this process, a nerve stimulus is translated into an image which is in turn translated into a sound and words, which in turn become concepts. In each step a carrying over occurs between different bodily spheres where no literal translation is possible -- we lack an "organ" for truth.<sup>4</sup> Further, each perceptual metaphor is unique, yet the perceptual process involves ordering our perceptions according to similarity and sameness. It treats different things as the same, in other words, metaphorically.<sup>5</sup> Concepts point out only the relation of things to man, not the things themselves. There is no ground or permanent domain of literal meaning that serves as a reference for the metaphorical. What is called literal are those metaphors that have become dead, whose metaphorical meaning has been forgotten or worn away.<sup>6</sup>

Nietzsche is saying that we need to recognize what we are doing. We must adopt a good will towards appearance (it

---

<sup>3</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, On Truth and Lying in an Extra Moral Sense trans. in Friedrich Nietzsche on Rhetoric and Language, Gilman, Blair, Parent, eds. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989) 250.

<sup>4</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, The Gay Science §354.

<sup>5</sup> Lawrence Hinman, "Nietzsche, Metaphor and Truth," Philosophy and Phenomenological Research 43 (1982): 185.

<sup>6</sup> Nietzsche, "On Truth and Lying" 250.

is precisely this we love in woman). Dogmatic philosophers mistakenly deny our senses and idealize reason, positing a "real" world behind or beyond them that is accessible through reason. Nietzsche is rejecting both the idea of a transcendental world by reference to which this world is illusory and the idea that the world is immediately present to us. Thus the world is illusory -- a hyperbolic way of saying that all our truths are mediated. They allow us to function and make calculations but we can not claim they are true of any "real" world in itself. The apparent world is not opposed to the true world -- it is the world as it appears.

Ultimately all relations of truth and language become functions of metaphor and thus of art. The human is an artist for whom metaphor is the fundamental vehicle of thought. Life becomes an aesthetic phenomenon (and we love precisely this art and this instinct in woman) and as an aesthetic phenomenon existence is still bearable for us."<sup>7</sup> It must be emphasized that Nietzsche is not denying that truth is possible but saying that it is a heuristic device that has no claims to describing the way things are in themselves, only as they are for us. Truth is language -- we think only in the form of language<sup>8</sup> -- and language is the

---

<sup>7</sup> Nietzsche, Gay Science §107.

<sup>8</sup> Nietzsche, The Will to Power §522.

lie that protects humanity from the hostile chaos of the universe (her great art is the lie -- woman is so artistic).<sup>9</sup> Language is the mediating function between us and the world<sup>10</sup> -- and if we abolish the "true" world then we abolish the "apparent" world as well. There is only the world, the whole, chaotic becoming, as we see it perspectively.<sup>11</sup> There is no absolute truth.

In attempting to use metaphors in a way that shows the functioning of metaphors through a series of paradoxical substitutions, Nietzsche has the "impossible task of defining in unambiguous signs (Truth is...) the functioning of signs."<sup>12</sup> Thus Nietzsche's texts undermine themselves in a way that shows that all such undermining of foundations is inevitable. Critic J. Hillis Miller says of Nietzsche's essay on truth and lying that

---

<sup>9</sup> Nietzsche, Gay Science §361.

<sup>10</sup> Alan D. Schrift, "Language, Metaphor, Rhetoric: Nietzsche's Deconstruction of Epistemology" Journal of the History of Philosophy 23 (1985): 373.

<sup>11</sup> Nietzsche, Gay Science §109.

<sup>12</sup> J. Hillis Miller, "Dismembering and Disremembering in Nietzsche's 'On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense'" in Why Nietzsche Now?, ed. Daniel O'Hara (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985) 47.

[the] human world, for Nietzsche as for Freud, in their different ways, is a labyrinth of figurative displacements around an unknown center. What Nietzsche names "metaphor," "illusion," "transposition," or "dissimulation" is originally a catachresis. It replaces the unknown X with a sign which is neither literal nor figurative. In this it undermines the distinction between the truth of literal language and the lie of figurative language which is the foundation of Nietzsche's construction of the labyrinth of his essay.<sup>13</sup>

Once the opposition between the "real" and "apparent" worlds is done away with in favor of the world that simply appears, and in which appearances are never replaced with the "real" but only with new appearances, or new perspectives, the way is cleared for creative interpretation.<sup>14</sup> There is no "natural" world as in "the nature of things," only interpretations as human creations.<sup>15</sup> The world is a work of art -- that gives birth to itself.<sup>16</sup> With interpretation and multiplicity the individual is free to play, to "overcome the spirit of gravity" and seriousness (women can make seriousness and gravity "appear like folly"). What is valued is not the uncovering of a reality but the interpretation itself.

---

<sup>13</sup> Miller, "Dismembering..." 45.

<sup>14</sup> Alphonso Lingis, "The Will to Power," in The New Nietzsche, ed. David B. Allison (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1977) 43.

<sup>15</sup> Allan Megill 30-32.

<sup>16</sup> Nietzsche, Will to Power §796.

The relationship between art and truth is a fundamental aspect of Nietzsche's thought, where art is both the form and the means for illusion as our only way of apprehending the world -- art is that "good will towards appearance."<sup>17</sup> Paradoxically, only art is true because it treats appearance as appearance. In questions of art, truth, and appearance in Nietzsche's texts, "woman" is a primary metaphor. "Woman" is thus also fundamental to Nietzsche's texts, where she appears in many guises, one more of which is the *Vita Femina*:

But perhaps this is the most powerful magic of life: it is covered by a veil interwoven with gold, a veil of beautiful possibilities, sparkling with promise, resistance, bashfulness, mockery, pity, and seduction. Yes, life is a woman.<sup>18</sup>

The *vita femina* becomes a "central image of Nietzsche's metaphorical thought about meta-phor."<sup>19</sup> She is appearance as art, the veil thrown over existence that makes it bearable. Life is change and chaos, where every "being" is a plurality of forces and multiple meanings that is both affected and effects within a field of forces in which power is the differential element.<sup>20</sup> What is, is the whole: a

---

<sup>17</sup> Nietzsche, Gay Science §107.

<sup>18</sup> Nietzsche, Gay Science §339.

<sup>19</sup> Eric Blondel, "Nietzsche: Life as Metaphor " in New Nietzsche 151.

<sup>20</sup> Lingis, "The Will to Power" 51.

world of effects that are reinterpreted, and this interpretation/reinterpretation is the will to power. Again, "woman" as a metaphor for life leads us back to Nietzsche's important themes.

The world as will to power<sup>21</sup> is becoming, difference, plurality -- not being, identity, unity. It is not the Hegelian assimilation of what is other but an affirmation of difference -- the pathos of distance.<sup>22</sup> Knowing is no longer finding but creating. As such it is the ability to command a perspective of something -- without forgetting that it is a perspective. Although Nietzsche accords to the desire to fix and order things a necessity for life, he also attributes it to the common or the herd mentality and rejects it in favor of the individual, the unique, the ability to live without fixed values.

Throughout Nietzsche's texts life and the individual's relation to life are written about in sexual terms: creation, birth, potency, fertility, violation, love, penetration, castration, marriage, seduction, temptation,

---

<sup>21</sup> "Will to power" is a difficult term because Nietzsche does not believe that there is any single "will" or any "who wills?" Neither is power simply identified with crude force. As Nietzsche says, it is not "I will" but "it wills" -- the idea of ego, the subject, or substance is already an interpretation that is the result of a struggle of forces, an interpretation already made that we only react to. The will to power is best characterized as interpretation -- the legislation of a point of view.

<sup>22</sup> Lingis, "The Will to Power" 41.



death, violence, destruction, voyeurism, sterility ... The metaphor "woman" and her relation to "man" is so central that Nietzsche does not write about truth, life, knowledge, spirit, art, wisdom, or the will to power, eternal return, and the overman without using these terms. Nietzsche uses male/female sexual imagery to say metaphorically what cannot be said otherwise. Sexuality becomes one mask of the metaphor for the relation between art and truth that is life itself.

In this relationship the artist as the warrior against the ascetic ideal is ambiguously potent/fertile, male/female, giving/taking, hard/tender, and active/reactive -- but never in the sense that these are opposites.<sup>23</sup> Wisdom is a woman who wants only such warriors, those who can laugh and kill the spirit of gravity. This spirit belongs to the ascetic interpretation of life as a burden and suffering for which someone must be blamed. According to Nietzsche, ultimately the sufferers are led to blame themselves and burdened with guilt and sin, redeemed only in another world "beyond" this one. The ascetic view is itself an affirmation of life in that it offers an interpretation of suffering that both explains and justifies it, yet in claiming to be

---

<sup>23</sup> And in implicating "woman" in the discourse about truth and logic Nietzsche is already suggesting (posthumously?) the deconstruction of phallogocentrism that is made within contemporary literary/philosophical criticism, most notably by Jacques Derrida (See Chapter III).

true for all, disguises its nature as interpretation and presents itself as unconditional truth. Thus Nietzsche views the ascetic as encompassing not only Christianity, but metaphysics and science, all of which posit some other world that redeems appearance. In the case of science this is a set of "natural" laws and explanation that cease to be heuristic devices and are claimed true of the "real" world on the basis of a set of unquestioned propositions or first principles.

Culture and life as metaphor and metaphorical are a displacement, a separation of thought from the body, which is displaced through language, as "surface" phenomena.<sup>24</sup> The body is unknown and speaks only through signs -- man's "nature" is already second nature, the result of a primeval and unconscious struggle of impulses of which we only experience the result. Life as such is a sickness in the form of bad consciousness, or the repression of our instincts, a repression that nevertheless is necessary for

---

<sup>24</sup> Giles Deleuze, "Active and Reactive" in New Nietzsche 80; Eric Blondel, "Nietzsche's Style of Affirmation: The Metaphors of Genealogy" in Nietzsche as Affirmative Thinker, ed. Yirmiyahu Yovel (Dordrecht/Boston/Lancaster: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1986) 135.

our survival.<sup>25</sup> Yet, for Nietzsche, this sickness is a "sickness like pregnancy," both sick and productive at the same time, and "man" was the result.<sup>26</sup> "Woman" thus gives birth to humanity and culture. "Woman" gives birth to sublimation and over-coming.<sup>27</sup> As Zarathustra says,

Everything about woman is a riddle, and everything about woman has one solution: that is pregnancy. Man is for woman a means: the end is always the child. But what is woman for man?<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> Nietzsche, On the Genealogy of Morals (with Ecce Homo) trans. Walter Kaufmann (Canada: Random House, 1969) Section II, §16: "All instincts that do not discharge themselves outwardly turn inward -- this is what I call the internalization of man ... But thus began the gravest and uncanniest illness, from which humanity has not yet recovered, man's suffering of man, of himself -- the result of a forcible sundering from his animal past. ... Let us add at once that, on the other hand, the existence on earth of an animal soul turned against itself, taking sides against itself, was something so new, profound, unheard of, enigmatic, contradictory, and pregnant with a future that the aspect of the earth was essentially altered."

<sup>26</sup> Blondel, "Nietzsche: Life as Metaphor" 153.

<sup>27</sup> Eric Blondel, to whose reading of the *vita femina* I owe part of my own interpretation, interprets Nietzsche's *vita femina* alongside Freud's notion of primal repression as the origin of consciousness. Thus Blondel looks for the "father" if woman is the "mother" of culture. He locates the dead father in the repressed body (154), and says, "The culture she gives birth to begins with the initial lie, which is the repression of the body, the dissimulation of the father" (156). Blondel brings in the figure of Oedipus -- one must forget the murder of the father or face madness, tragedy, and death (163). Yet against this one must recall Nietzsche's redefinition of Oedipus as the hero who decides to live with what he knows. Tracy Strong in "Oedipus as Hero: Family and Family Metaphors in Nietzsche" in Why Nietzsche Now? argues for a Nietzsche that thus redefines Oedipus (318). Nietzsche himself is not interested in the father, but in "male mothers."

<sup>28</sup> Nietzsche, Thus Spoke Zarathustra 66.

As the metaphor of metaphor woman is ambiguous and wears multiple masks. She can be misread, as the metaphysical idealists do when they congeal the *vita femina* into an ideal, that of the Eternal Feminine, which is based on a principle of identity that turns active creativity into voyeurism and necrophilia.<sup>29</sup> What is fixed is hostile to life, as metaphysical truth is hostile to woman. "Woman" is displacement itself, which can be figured but not represented.

Life as "woman" is also life as will to power, and thus not passive. It is both force, commanding, and overcoming, as well as what must be commanded. Woman as nature is woman as nature's power and the joy in artistic semblance which transforms the insight into the horror of existence into a knowledge that both obscures and reveals this existence. In Nietzsche's characterization, life is Dionysian. Woman here is associated with the female maenad, a creative and destructive priestess of Dionysus who "tears to pieces when she loves" and inspires fear and reverence in the face of the chaos of existence.<sup>30</sup> The Dionysian is the affirmation of totality -- the "tragic man affirms even the harshest suffering."<sup>31</sup> Dionysus is "he who no longer denies," who can

---

<sup>29</sup> Blondel, "Nietzsche: Life as Metaphor" 161.

<sup>30</sup> Nietzsche, Ecce Homo §5; Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil §239.

<sup>31</sup> Nietzsche, Will to Power §1052.

affirm suffering and "redeem" existence.<sup>32</sup> Life is collective continuation through procreation and sexuality -- change as continual creation.<sup>33</sup>

Nietzsche's early work The Birth of Tragedy begins his analysis of the Dionysian in terms of its role in early Greek culture and the archetypal forces embodied in the Greek deities Dionysus and Apollo. Apollo signifies the imposition of form through the plastic and poetic arts on the formless flux of becoming that is signified by Dionysus. Greek Tragedy, which was connected with the Dionysian religion, was able to affirm form (as a temporary ordering of chaos) and create meaning while recognizing the destructive power of life. However, the advent of Platonic rationality ruptured the unity of the Apollonian and the Dionysian and gave precedence to the principle of form. For Nietzsche, this elevation of being as unchanging form which became the criterion of truth was a falsification of the appropriate emergence of form as a process of creation out of formlessness in the aesthetic mode of creativity -- form which admits its deceptive character.<sup>34</sup> Thus began Western culture and the alienation of man from his instincts and

---

<sup>32</sup> Nietzsche, Twilight of the Idols ( with The Anti-Christ), trans. R.J. Hollingdale (New York: Penguin, 1968) 110 and 54.

<sup>33</sup> Nietzsche, Will to Power §1049.

<sup>34</sup> Lawrence Hatab, "Nietzsche on Woman," Southern Journal of Philosophy 19 (1981): 337

from life as change and creativity. Here we can see the context for Nietzsche's critique of "Truth."

Further, in pre-Socratic Greek culture, Dionysian mythology expressed the cyclic regeneration of nature, the idea that the whole is indestructible. The Dionysian was a cult of women, worshippers of a god that was frequently characterized as androgynous and associated with pre-Hellenic mother goddesses. Nietzsche adopted his use of the terms Apollonian and Dionysian from J.J. Bachofen's work on myth and mother right, in which Dionysus has the ambiguous nature of a phallic god that served to intensify feminine power. The Dionysian, for Bachofen, represents a stage in the rise of the Apollonian patriarchal principle that was still tied to the feminine association with the earth and sensuality -- "The phallic god cannot be thought of separately from feminine materiality."<sup>35</sup> For Bachofen, as for Nietzsche, the Apollonianism that characterized later Hellenic society represented the "triumph" of motherless paternity and immutable form. However, where Bachofen regarded this as progress in the social order, Nietzsche clearly did not. According to Lawrence Hatab:

---

<sup>35</sup> J.J. Bachofen, Myth, Religion, and Mother Right, trans. Ralph Manheim (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967).

In general, one could accurately summarize the cross-cultural features of the masculine-feminine duality as follows: the masculine = light, knowledge, construction, consciousness, form; the feminine = darkness, mystery, destruction, unconsciousness, formlessness. So in this sense the Dionysian cult represented the worship of the feminine principle.<sup>36</sup>

Hatab has suggested that "woman" perhaps represents for Nietzsche "a specific battle in which he fights for the preservation of the Dionysian."<sup>37</sup> It also indicates the ancient basis for Western stereotypes, within which Nietzsche is valorizing "woman" in an attempt to revalue the values of Western culture, albeit in terms that 20th century women might reject.

This ecstatic affirmation of life as appearance requires strength and struggle. It is this attitude toward life that is figured in the famous remark about the whip in Zarathustra in the section "On Little Old and Young Women." Here Zarathustra speaks of women to an old woman he has met, who then in turn tells him a "little truth" about women -- "You are going to women? Do not forget the whip!"<sup>38</sup> Zarathustra does not forget. Speaking to Life in "The Other Dancing Song" he says "Keeping time with my whip, you shall

---

<sup>36</sup> Hatab 338.

<sup>37</sup> Hatab 337. Hatab even suggests that "the 'place' of the feminine, for Nietzsche, reflects a Dionysian superiority [and] ironically ... it would not be difficult to interpret Nietzsche's philosophy literally as a 'feminism'!" (339).

<sup>38</sup> Nietzsche, Zarathustra 67.

dance and cry! Or have I forgotten the whip? Not I!"<sup>39</sup> The context for both remarks is Nietzsche's insistence that life requires a struggle -- and it is not clear to whom the whip belongs. Elsewhere in Zarathustra Nietzsche refers to the "evil tamers of beasts," a reference to those dogmatists and practitioners of the ascetic ideal who force life and truth into false, frozen forms as the lion tamer uses a whip on circus lions.<sup>40</sup>

Nietzsche frequently uses situations, plot fragments, phrases, or characterizations that cue references to other texts. In the section "On Little Old and Young Women" we are cued to pull Plato into our reading when the old woman asks Zarathustra what he has hidden under his cloak -- a reference to the Phaedrus and the written scroll that Phaedrus has hidden under his cloak. With Plato in mind we have no trouble seeing in the figure of the old woman the Diotima of Plato's Symposium, who is the woman who spoke to Socrates' soul and gave him his teachings about love, just as Zarathustra's old woman gives him his truth about woman. By subtle allusion, Nietzsche is reminding us of his revaluation of Platonic thought by "removing" the Socratic interpretation of Diotima's philosophy, in which human love for another is the first step up the ladder towards the

---

<sup>39</sup> Nietzsche, Zarathustra 226.

<sup>40</sup> Nietzsche, Zarathustra 195.



contemplation of perfect form, and restoring -- in the compressed metaphor of the whip -- the pre-Socratic view of life as becoming and struggle for power. Bachofen describes Diotima as a figure of pre-Hellenic mystery mother religion.<sup>41</sup> By alluding to her Nietzsche can refer again to life as feminine procreation.

While Diotima is only an allusion, one female figure in Nietzsche's writing bears a name: the mythological figure of Ariadne. She is important to Nietzsche's telling of the Eternal Return and its relation to the Dionysian. Nietzsche believed that myth was a central element of culture, one reduced to mere fiction by the time of the 19th century.<sup>42</sup> Myth depends on instinct and acceptance, and is dissolved by rationality and science. The Eternal-Return in Nietzsche's work has elements of a new myth, one that can give life meaning in the face of the loss of the old myths and modern humanity's homelessness. Myth provides for Nietzsche a system of unconscious, non-conceptual knowledge that can unite the participants of a particular culture.<sup>43</sup> As the

---

<sup>41</sup> Bachofen 90. Andrea Nye, in her essay "The Hidden Host: Irigary and Diotima at Plato's Symposium," makes a very Nietzschean argument: "Understood in historical context, Diotima is not an anomaly in Platonic discourse, but the hidden host of Plato's banquet, speaking for a pre-Socratic world view against which classical Greek thought is asserted" (Hypatia 3 (Winter, 1989): 45).

<sup>42</sup> Megill 72.

<sup>43</sup> Megill 82.

thinker of the Eternal-Return, Nietzsche is creating new values, not only criticizing old ones. For Nietzsche, myth is, as faith is for Pascal, an illusion to which we choose to submit, and thus becomes not only the subject but the very form art takes.

The Eternal-Return as myth becomes a story that can transfigure the thinker.<sup>44</sup> The world is such that if anything ever recurred again, everything else would have to recur again.<sup>45</sup> All the accidents and fortuitous connections that combine to create a single individual are crucial. Thus the highest form of the affirmation of one's life and self is not merely the acceptance of life -- as change, appearance, will to power -- but the willingness to accept the exact same life over and over again. Everything is connected. As Nietzsche says, this affirmation is such

that one wants nothing to be different, not forward, not backward, not in all eternity. Not merely bear what is necessary, still less conceal it -- all idealism is mendaciousness in the face of what is necessary -- but love it.<sup>46</sup>

---

<sup>44</sup> Lingis, "The Will to Power" 59.

<sup>45</sup> Alexander Nehamas, Nietzsche: Life as Literature (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985) 6.

<sup>46</sup> Nietzsche, Ecce Homo 258. This becomes a powerful psychological tool in providing meaning to life in the absence of meaning.

Life in itself is meaningless. It has only the value an individual or a society can give it.<sup>47</sup> To accept the present is to accept everything that has happened in creating it. One must reinterpret the past according to future goals in such a way that nothing is cause for the resentment or rejection that comes from brooding about what is past. In part this goal is the creation of a self. Nietzsche denies the unity of the self in its givenness, claiming that it is an abstraction based on reduction -- a surface phenomenon and interpretation.

This affirmation is intricately bound up with Ariadne/Dionysus, especially in Nietzsche's later works. Nietzsche's remark "Who apart from me knows what Ariadne is!" has puzzled and intrigued many interpreters.<sup>48</sup> Historically, Ariadne is associated with Dionysus, Theseus, and the Labyrinth of Greek mythology. In most versions of the myth, Ariadne leads Theseus out of the labyrinth by a thread, after which he abandons her and she marries Dionysus and/or dies.<sup>49</sup> In Nietzsche's version of the myth (found not only in published works but in his Nachlass), Ariadne

---

<sup>47</sup> Nehamas 135.

<sup>48</sup> Nietzsche, Ecce Homo 308. Ariadne is a "what," not a "who." Many of Nietzsche's readers look for Ariadne in figures from Nietzsche's biography such as Cosima Wagner (most notably Walter Kaufmann), ignoring the place of Ariadne within Nietzsche's writing.

<sup>49</sup> Edith Hamilton, Mythology (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1942) 67; Hamilton 215-216.

rejects Theseus, who represents pity, and chooses the labyrinth as active nihilism or "one's fate in the spirit of amor fati" -- Nietzsche's affirmation of the Eternal-Return.<sup>50</sup> Ariadne can be seen as human suffering transformed by the Dionysian experience.

As tragic sufferer, Ariadne takes on many of the aspects previously assigned to Zarathustra. In "The Lament of Ariadne" in Nietzsche's Dionysos Dithyrambs she is referred to as "the loneliest one," as was Zarathustra in his confrontation with the dwarf at the gateway Augenblick that is a reference to the Eternal-Return.<sup>51</sup> She must overcome her pity for humanity, and chose the affirmation of life in death and suffering, tasks that are also Zarathustra's. The section of Zarathustra called "On the Great Longing" was originally titled "Ariadne" in Nietzsche's notes, a section addressed to Zarathustra's soul -- a reference which survives in numerous allusions to the secret of the soul, labyrinths, riddles, and threads.<sup>52</sup> Ariadne is the transvaluation of all values in the dithyramb and is perhaps Dionysus' first disciple (a discipleship Nietzsche also attributes to himself). Dionysus becomes the

---

<sup>50</sup> Adrian Del Caro, "Symbolizing Philosophy: Ariadne and the Labyrinth," Nietzsche-Studien 17 (1988): 140.

<sup>51</sup> Reference to Ariadne: Del Caro 155; Reference to Zarathustra: Nietzsche, Zarathustra 156.

<sup>52</sup> Del Caro 137.

"Tempter god" who is the catalyst for our need to enter the labyrinth, there either to overcome or become lost.<sup>53</sup>

In an interpretation of "The Lament of Ariadne" Karl Reinhardt (1935) makes much of this transformation in gender. Dionysus becomes a new myth that replaces Zarathustra for a Nietzsche who no longer "keeps at arms length the possibility of [such] deifications."<sup>54</sup> "The Sorcerer's Song" in Zarathustra, sung in distress by the Magician whom Zarathustra beats as an ascetic of the spirit,<sup>55</sup> becomes "The Lament of Ariadne" in the Dithyrambs, which changes the masculine endings to feminine ones and adds a dramatic epilogue in which Dionysus appears "in emerald beauty" telling Ariadne "I am your labyrinth."<sup>56</sup> Instead of earning a beating, the one who invokes the god is heard through a re-interpretation, a change of roles: "A masculine ending comes to be replaced by a feminine."<sup>57</sup> Yet the change is still ambiguous, the dithyramb "labyrinthine." Nietzsche halts at invoking new gods, earlier in Beyond Good

---

<sup>53</sup> Nietzsche, The Gay Science §370; Beyond Good and Evil §29 and §295.

<sup>54</sup> Karl Reinhardt, "Nietzsche's Lament of Ariadne" Interpretation 6/3 (October, 1977): 216-217.

<sup>55</sup> Nietzsche, Zarathustra 256.

<sup>56</sup> Reinhardt 221. Also see David Farrell Krell Postponements: Women, Sensuality, and Death in Nietzsche (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986) 19.

<sup>57</sup> Reinhardt 220.

and Evil even suggesting the possibility that the Eternal Return might be a "circulus vitiosus deus" -- the vicious circle.<sup>58</sup> He had used Zarathustra's cudgel to strike away the ascetic of the spirit when he had had enough of his song.<sup>59</sup> Reinhardt suggests that to unravel this mystery one must unravel the thread out of the labyrinth that "winds out into one's own hand."<sup>60</sup> One way to avoid or at least postpone the construction of new gods while speaking new truths is to parody constantly the form in which these truths are represented. This parody is pronounced throughout Nietzsche's texts in the figure of "woman."<sup>61</sup>

Just as "woman" figures what is highest in Nietzsche's thought, "woman" also figures what is lowest. In Nietzsche's writing the reactive woman appears alongside the affirmative woman -- one must be the master of many perspectives to

---

<sup>58</sup> Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil §56.

<sup>59</sup> Nietzsche, Zarathustra 255-256.

<sup>60</sup> Reinhardt 222.

<sup>61</sup> David Farrell Krell picks up Reinhardt's suggestion of the halt Nietzsche makes at this point. His thesis is that of a tragic Ariadne that Nietzsche postponed -- an Ariadne that represents the configuration Woman/Sensuality/Death. The women in Nietzsche's texts become duplicities (again the vicious circle) that are kept at a distance. There can be no straightforward revelation of Dionysos. The Eternal-Return is announced in the figure of Zarathustra, who "postpones the consequences of his own teaching, invents a consolation for himself, flirts with eternity" -- a postponement of the tragedy that is yet "in pursuit, relentlessly." It is the hand of woman holding the thread that Nietzsche comes back to, a hand that Nietzsche himself writes with ... (85-87).

"know women." Most of Nietzsche's more notorious remarks about women are to be found among his analysis of the reactive, negative, life-denying perspective. Nietzsche claims, as a master of perspectives, to be able to reverse perspective -- to look up from the swamp as well as down from mountain tops.<sup>62</sup> In Nietzsche's analysis of the reactive the word female becomes a pejorative term. His remarks embody his anti-egalitarianism and his views of the decadence of Western culture (Platonic/Christian/Scientific) which suppresses nature and the creative instinct in favor of spirit, mind, and reason, and which levels society, thus prohibiting the emergence of the exceptional individual in the figure of the artist-creator that Nietzsche valorizes. Nietzsche's thought is hierarchical in a non-political and relative sense. It alternates between different perspectives that are part of an "order of rank"<sup>63</sup> that consists of relative gradations between the noble, active, affirmative master morality and the base, passive, negative slave or herd morality. The herd is associated by Nietzsche with social existence, which he saw as the imposition of uniformity.<sup>64</sup> The herd individual is seen by society only as a function of the larger group and values him/herself only

---

<sup>62</sup> Nietzsche, Ecce Homo 223.

<sup>63</sup> Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil §228.

<sup>64</sup> Nietzsche, The Gay Science §354.

as this function.<sup>65</sup> While this is an affirmation of a life that is good for some, what Nietzsche is rejecting is not any particular judgement but the very tendency on the part of society to make general judgements about the value of life and impose unconditional codes "as if there were such a single theory with a character of its own, capable of being praised or blamed by some uniform standard."<sup>66</sup> For Nietzsche, it is impossible to prescribe what anyone should be -- the individual must create his own life. Like the ascetic, the herd is motivated by revenge or envy of those who can maintain their distance from the crowd.

The careful reader understands that these are not differences of class but differences between individuals in terms of their attitudes towards life. According to Nietzsche, one's attitude toward life is valued positively if it is an affirmation of life that acts out of abundance and love and negatively if it is a denial of life that results from hunger and dissatisfaction. This goes beyond the distinction between those who idealize life as being or those who can accept change, destruction, and becoming. Thus, the will to life as becoming can be that of Dionysian affirmation or a nihilistic hatred that wants to destroy. The will to immortalize similarly can come from artistic

---

<sup>65</sup> Nietzsche, The Gay Science §116.

<sup>66</sup> Nehamas 135.



love or from a tyrannical, reactive will that turns idiosyncrasy into binding law.<sup>67</sup> For Nietzsche the affirmative/reactive is the important distinction and he valorizes the creator who acts out of a sense of the fullness and value of his/her own life without attempting to create values for all and who is opposed to a herd mentality that acts out of revenge and imposes its standards on everyone.<sup>68</sup> The creator, as I indicated above (page 11) embodies both male and female characteristics. What is noble is a matter of self-overcoming: the ability to say "This is my good and my evil."<sup>69</sup>

Reactive "woman" takes two forms: "woman" as ideal and "woman" who plays with truth "as if it were a fetish," using it to her own advantage. "Woman" in the first sense is the Eternal Feminine -- woman as hypostatized ideal (woman as such, truth as such) or woman who herself identifies with

---

<sup>67</sup> Nietzsche, The Gay Science §370.

<sup>68</sup> Hatab 341.

<sup>69</sup> Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil §257.

such ideals.<sup>70</sup> Nietzsche says, "Woman wants to become self-reliant -- and for that reason she is beginning to enlighten men about 'woman as such': this is one of the worst developments of the general uglification of Europe..." and "even now truth finds it necessary to stifle her yawns when she is expected to give answers. In the end she is a woman: she should not be violated."<sup>71</sup> "Woman" in the second sense collaborates with the idealism of men:

Woman, conscious of man's feelings concerning women, assists his efforts at idealization by adorning herself, walking beautifully, dancing, expressing delicate thoughts; in the same way, she practises modesty, reserve, distance -- realizing instinctively that in this way the idealizing capacity of the man will grow.<sup>72</sup>

Seduction is here applied as a reactionary force, as deception with a bad conscience.

The passages on women and feminism in Beyond Good and Evil (§232-239) are the last part of a larger section titled "Our Virtues." The major themes of this section set the

---

<sup>70</sup> Nietzsche is using Goethe's Eternal Feminine from the last lines of Faust in order to parody its idealism. That his translator Hollingdale seems not to have noticed this, and remarks "das Ewig-Weibliche, Goethe's coinage in the last lines of Faust ("The eternal-feminine draws us aloft") is often the object of Nietzsche's mockery, apparently because he cannot see any meaning in it," is poor reading (Nietzsche, Twilight of the Idols 69n). Nietzsche says of the Eternal Feminine " -- I do not doubt that every nobler woman will resist this faith" (Beyond Good and Evil §236).

<sup>71</sup> Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil §232 and §220.

<sup>72</sup> Nietzsche, Will to Power §806.

context for reading the passages on "woman." Nietzsche here addresses the "first born of the twentieth century" and stresses both the need to maintain an order of rank and the necessity of suffering as the molding force of the exceptional individual. In his defense of anti-conventional morality Nietzsche defends the exception against its opposition from the mediocre bourgeois norm -- from the revenge of the limited and their pity:

... it is immoral to say: "what is right for one is fair for the other."<sup>73</sup>  
 ... the general welfare is no ideal, no goal, no remotely intelligible concept, but only an emetic -- that what is fair for one cannot by any means for that reason alone be fair for others.<sup>74</sup>

Nietzsche's arguments against equality and feminism have to be read from the perspective of his insistence that the concept equality had so far served to level society and make it average and his insistence that no new reactionary ideals or binding conceptions of how individuals must function be established -- his call for the individual willing to experiment and create new values for his/herself.

It is in this sense that Nietzsche calls feminism a backwardness, and a "weakening and dulling of the most feminine instincts."<sup>75</sup> Here feminism appears as a

---

<sup>73</sup> Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil §221.

<sup>74</sup> Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil §228.

<sup>75</sup> Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil §239.

continuation of decadent Western (and predominantly masculine) culture by attempting to speak for "woman as such." Feminism is equated in this sense with idealization. Thus, Nietzsche, here and elsewhere, makes his remarks about feminists as abortive females, or remarks, in reference to "woman as clerk," that "woman is retrogressing."<sup>76</sup> Thus also Nietzsche writes:

"Emancipation of women" -- that is the instinctive hatred of the abortive woman, who is incapable of giving birth, against the woman who is turned out well -- the fight against the "man" is always a mere means, pretext, tactic. By raising themselves higher, as "woman in herself," as the "higher woman," as a female "idealist," they want to lower the general rank of woman; and there is no surer means for that than higher education, slacks, and political voting-cattle rights. At bottom, the emancipated are the anarchists in the world of the 'eternally feminine,' the underprivileged whose most fundamental instinct is revenge.<sup>77</sup>

Given Nietzsche's own basis for assigning a positive or negative value to a perspective, "the emancipated woman" is here condemned by Nietzsche not because she adopts the goals of equality per se, but because she adopts these values from within a herd morality, motivated by revenge, and attempts to legislate for all. Yet it is just this kind of writing that gives the reader pause, even when the context and function seem under interpretative control. It is not really

---

<sup>76</sup> Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil §239.

<sup>77</sup> Nietzsche, Ecce Homo 267.

clear whose revenge is speaking. The same hand that writes that the perfect woman is of a higher, rarer type than the perfect man also reinscribes Socrates' last words: "O Criten, do tell someone to take those women away!"<sup>78</sup> As Derrida claims, "perhaps it simply must be admitted that Nietzsche himself did not see his way too clearly there:"

He was, he dreaded this castrated woman.  
He was, he dreaded this castrating woman.  
He was, he loved this affirming woman.

...  
At once, simultaneously or successively,  
depending on the position of his body and the  
situation of his story, Nietzsche was all of  
these.<sup>79</sup>

Nietzsche's "remarks on woman call into question the ideal or the idol of feminism and anti-feminism -- woman as such, in herself, engendered in terms of what should be the case for or the condition of women as human beings."<sup>80</sup> To Nietzsche, feminism is not progressive but regressive in that women take their place in masculine society only if they castrate themselves. This resonates with a contemporary feminist concern that the attempt to gain political, economical, and social equality by participation in a male

---

<sup>78</sup> Nietzsche, Human All Too Human, trans. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) §337; Human All Too Human §437.

<sup>79</sup> Jacques Derrida, Spurs, trans. Barbara Harlow (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979) 101.

<sup>80</sup> Gayle Ormiston, "Traces of Derrida: Nietzsche's Image of Woman" Philosophy Today 28 (Summer 1984): 180.

society must avoid relapsing into patriarchal practices and values.

In a related context I would include Nietzsche's remark on the scholarly woman:

When a woman has scholarly inclinations there is usually something wrong with her sexually. Sterility itself disposes one towards a masculinity of taste; for man is, if I may say so, "the sterile animal."<sup>81</sup>

It is the association of sterility and masculinity that is striking. Statements like this and the one above were written both to provoke and to eliminate the reader who could not or would not be drawn in by them to struggle with Nietzsche's texts. Here it is necessary also to bring in Nietzsche's critique of the "scholarly type," in which the Scholar (male) is depicted as an old maid who can neither beget nor give birth and whose wisdom has the odor of the swamps.<sup>82</sup> The modern objective spirit may deserve care and honor, but can be no goal and thus it is also "nothing for women" -- science in the form of disinterested objectivity offends the modesty of all real women, who "know" that everything is a matter of interest.<sup>83</sup> Once again women are criticized when they adopt the decadent Western values that Nietzsche rejects.

---

<sup>81</sup> Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil §144.

<sup>82</sup> Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil §206; Zarathustra 125.

<sup>83</sup> Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil §207 and §127.

Setting Nietzsche's remarks on "woman" in context and explicating their function is not the end of any interpretation of "woman" in his text. As Allison Ainley has written, the feminist reader

who wishes to question the singular, unified self implicated with patriarchal systems cannot accept a purely mimetic view of language and consequently requires a more complex understanding of "woman" in Nietzsche's writings.<sup>84</sup>

The reason one would want to question the rational concept of the self along with Nietzsche is that gender constructions are interrelated with our ontological, epistemological constructions of a rational, autonomous self -- to undermine the former requires the more general subversion of the latter. In other words, women are determined not only by their social and political status but also by the logical processes through which meaning is created.<sup>85</sup> Rationality, male power, and language as "phallogocratic" discourse are the objects of deconstruction "because of [their] coextensivity with the history of Western metaphysics, a history inseparable from political economy and from the property of man as holder of

---

<sup>84</sup> Alison Ainley "Ideal Selfishness: Nietzsche's Metaphor of Maternity" in Exceedingly Nietzsche, ed. David Farrell Krell and David Wood (New York: Routledge, 1988) 118.

<sup>85</sup> Alice Jardine, Gynesis: Configurations of Woman and Modernity (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985) 44.

property."<sup>86</sup> In this context, how do Nietzsche's feminine metaphors fare? Are they a reduction of women to woman and to seduction, a typical male appropriation characterized by the observation that "where woman and her domains are employed as a metaphor for some other human enterprise, the latter is viewed as belonging exclusively to man?"<sup>87</sup> Is Nietzsche a male philosopher dressing up like a woman?<sup>88</sup>

While Nietzsche's "woman" is stereotypical in some of her attributes, his use of "woman" exceeds familiar stereotypes. "Woman" as Nietzsche's lever to deconstruct rationalism disrupts not only rationality but gender differences and hierarchies. Nietzsche does not reduce "woman" to any particular image or totality, but affirms multiple possibilities.<sup>89</sup> If "progress in the life of reason

---

<sup>86</sup> Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Displacement and the Discourse of Woman" in Displacement: Derrida and After, ed. Mark Krupnick (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983) 185.

<sup>87</sup> Eva Feder Kittay, "Woman as Metaphor" Hypatia 3/2 (Summer, 1988): 79.

<sup>88</sup> Kelly Oliver, "Nietzsche's Woman" Radical Philosophy 48 (1988): 25.

<sup>89</sup> Gender here refers to masculine/feminine, not male/female. Where masculine and feminine are cultural masks that can change, the biological sexes remain, in fact Nietzsche insists on the "war of the sexes" as the necessary tension that generates the creative individual (Hatab 341). Nietzsche writes in the Gay Science "if both partners felt impelled by love to renounce themselves, we should then get -- I do not know what; perhaps an empty space?" (319).



is a struggle to transcend the feminine"<sup>90</sup> where the female is not even a self but only the object of knowledge (active male reason/mind/science applied to passive female sensation/matter/nature), then in deconstructing truth Nietzsche deconstructed the female object of knowledge as well. He both reverses the ancient Western sexual hierarchies

Active/Passive  
Reason/Intuition  
Head/Heart  
Father/Mother  
Form/Matter  
Logos/Pathos  
Culture/Nature  
Intelligible/Sensible  
Truth/Falsity  
Self/Other<sup>91</sup>

in which the first element of each pair is both masculine and superior -- the male half an "idealized" version of the female -- and valorizes the second feminine member. Beyond reversing the hierarchical pairs, however, Nietzsche undercuts the differences between them. The pairs are no longer opposites but interrelated, the sexual differences blurred, the sex they "belong" to questionable and engaged in a perspectival tension that flip-flops eternally. Nietzsche uses parody, style, and paradox to question all

---

<sup>90</sup> Genevieve Lloyd, "Texts, Metaphors and the Pretensions of Philosophy," Philosophy and Literary Theory 69 (1986): 98.

<sup>91</sup> Helene Cixous, "Sorties" in New French Feminisms, ed. Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron (New York: Schocken Books, 1981) 90.

"ideals" -- woman amuses herself in his texts beyond the grasp of norms and normalizing. His work tries to show that there are no universal hierarchies we must accept, only the imposition of a certain way of speaking, of a certain way of life.

Given the paradoxical, ironical aspects of Nietzsche's writing, it is still possible to do what many traditional philosophers have done and accord to the signature "Nietzsche" a system based on what Nietzsche believed about life, culture, knowledge, and truth (and those who do so usually leave "woman" out of their account). And yet, a careful reading of his texts also cannot avoid the possibility that Nietzsche's own metaphorical style(s) and irony suggest, that Truth inevitably sets itself up as an ideal, that in language what one wants to say is always subverted, that "we will always have a God [here understood in a more than religious sense] as long as we believe in grammar." Because a metaphor cannot be translated without remainder or without loss, the concept "metaphor" (one must see the paradox here) at least remains and is itself dependent upon a system of truth for its meaning.<sup>92</sup> The possibility exists that Nietzsche's ultimate affirmation of the Eternal Return is vicious circle and that Nietzsche's

---

<sup>92</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy " in Margins, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982) 219.

views are a consolation that justifies a particular life -- Nietzsche's. Nietzsche himself claims that his views are his own and that there is no one way. He wanted no disciples, only readers who could use what he said to create their own way.

The use of the metaphor "woman" as a central vehicle that bears Nietzsche's truths displaces all normative truth. "Woman" as a metaphor for metaphor is the subversive body in Nietzsche's texts. It is this very subversion that has become so important to the contemporary discourse of deconstruction and interpretation. But for the danger of presuming to read intention into any text in the name of Nietzsche, one would like to say that this is deliberate, that Nietzsche "knew" what he was doing, that there are textual clues that enable us to argue for Nietzsche's control of his text. Nietzsche perhaps intended to command "woman" as his strategy, practising "the multiplication of antagonistic metaphors in order better to control or neutralize their effects,"<sup>93</sup> while in undermining this control shows us as a way of writing that truth is both impossible and unavoidable. And one is tempted (Dionysus is the Tempter God) to see a plan in this, a carefully plotted labyrinth. Yet it is impossible for the reader to say what Nietzsche believes about "woman" -- they are his truths.

---

<sup>93</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology" 214.

Here the reader is forced to realize that her goals guide her reading. Mine are the affirmation of Nietzsche's affirmative woman and the reading of "woman" as a strategy women can use. It is Nietzsche himself who says if you want to know what I mean, then find the force that gives a new sense to what I say, and hang the text upon it.<sup>94</sup> Thus the feminist reader can laugh at Nietzsche's outrageous remarks (and in doing so echo Nietzsche's own laughter) and use, not what he said but how he said it, as the powerful weapon it is in the deconstruction of the opposition masculine/feminine -- no longer given but cultural constructions that permit multiple possibilities and differences. And, if it is necessary for now to be "men" because equality, power, and salaries are defined in male terms, here too Nietzsche provides a precedent. It is possible to fight for these same things out of a sense of abundance and affirmation, not imposing uniformity and reducing differences to similarities but respecting each individual's right within feminism to find their own way. As the feminist writer Julia Kristeva has argued, women must enter the patriarchal world but at the same time constantly expose that thought.<sup>95</sup> Nietzsche has also written that

---

<sup>94</sup> Giles Deleuze, "Nomad Thought" in New Nietzsche 145.

<sup>95</sup> Andrea Nye, Feminist Theory and the Philosophies of Man (London and New York: Croom Helm, 1988) 148.

the philosophic spirit always had to use as a mask and cocoon the previously established types of the contemplative man ... in order to be able to exist at all; the ascetic ideal for a long time served the philosopher as a form in which to appear... the ascetic priest provided until the most modern times the repulsive and gloomy caterpillar form in which alone the philosopher could live and creep about.<sup>96</sup>

Could "woman" become in the same way "that many-colored and dangerous winged creature" that emerges from the caterpillar "man"<sup>97</sup> using the patriarchal world as temporary shelter? Fittingly enough, Nietzsche himself precedes the aphorisms on "woman" in The Gay Science with the aphorism "Only as creators!" in which are these lines:

What was at first appearance becomes in the end, almost invariably, the essence and is effective as such. How foolish it would be to suppose that one only needs to point out this origin and this misty shroud of delusion in order to destroy the world that counts for real, so-called "reality." We can destroy only as creators. -- But let us not forget this either: it is enough to create new names and estimations and probabilities in order to create in the long run new "things."<sup>98</sup>

---

<sup>96</sup> Nietzsche, On the Genealogy of Morals 115-116.

<sup>97</sup> Nietzsche, On the Genealogy of Morals 116.

<sup>98</sup> Nietzsche, The Gay Science §58.

## CHAPTER II

### ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF NIETZSCHE RECEPTION

The interpretation that I have just offered has, as a type of reading influenced by Derrida, its own historical context in the reception of Nietzsche. The metaphor "woman" has had no significance in Nietzsche interpretation until recently, beginning with the 1970s. Taking seriously what Nietzsche writes about "woman" and women, instead of dismissing these remarks as irrelevant rhetorical aspects of primarily philosophical texts, is relevant to the development of feminism during this same period. This alone would not necessarily result in any change in the general views of Nietzsche as a misogynist, for feminist readers can (and do) take Nietzsche's remarks literally and treat his texts as examples of a type of sexism.<sup>1</sup> "Woman" is still not seen as an integral part of Nietzsche's writing, except in a negative way. Reading Nietzsche's remarks affirmatively, as I have done, also requires taking the literariness of his texts seriously -- a reading that no longer tries to read

<sup>1</sup> For example, see Ellen Kennedy, "Nietzsche: Women as Untermensch" in Women in Western Political Philosophy, ed. Kennedy, (New York: St. Martins Press, 1987) 179-201; Kelly Oliver, "Woman as Truth in Nietzsche's Writing," Social Theory and Practise 10 (1984): 185-200; and Kelly Oliver, "Nietzsche's Woman: The Poststructuralist Attempt to Do Away with Women," Radical Philosophy 48 (1988): 25-29.

Nietzsche according to traditional philosophical conventions, extracting a series of arguments, but pays attention to the styles and rhetoric of his texts as philosophy. This attitude toward interpretation also appears in the late 60s and 70s -- first in France -- among philosophers and literary critics who challenged the traditional divisions of academic disciplines and the conventions of traditional philosophy, history, and literary criticism. The works of Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault are important here. Derrida in particular combines a concern for feminist issues with an attention to Nietzsche's styles that reveals a different, affirmative "woman." *Annals?*

Derrida and Foucault represent the most influential contemporary strains of Nietzsche reading, but the character of their interpretations differs greatly from that given to his texts by earlier readers. Nietzsche interpretation has passed through a number of transformations since the first generation of his readers. The relative importance of a particular sequence of readers has also changed. Today the genealogy Nietzsche/Heidegger/Foucault/Derrida is the most significant and establishes the importance of Heidegger in Nietzsche interpretation, yet for Heidegger a different sequence was important, including Ernst Bertram, Ludwig Klages, and Alfred Bäumler. No history of Nietzsche's readers could hope to be complete as the list would have to include not only a multitude of philosophers and cultural

analysts, but all the writers of literature and poetry who found inspiration in Nietzsche's works. Further, there is the relationship of Nietzsche to Freud and psychology. Therefore, in offering a brief history of Nietzsche's readers with the intention of showing how "woman" has come to be of significance in Nietzsche interpretation, I must narrow my focus primarily to his philosophical readers with emphasis from Heidegger to the present.

Nietzsche's pre-world war I reputation was based primarily on his fame as a prose stylist, poet, essayist, and culture critic.<sup>2</sup> His work was important more to young artists and writers of the period from 1890-1915, who identified with his cosmopolitanism in their own efforts against mid-19th Century German parochialism.<sup>3</sup> A few philosophical interpretations were made, in particular those by the Danish critic Georg Brandes, one of Nietzsche's first supporters whose "Aristokratischer Radikalismus" in the late 1880s discussed the themes of Nietzsche's Genealogy of Morals, and Hans Vaihinger, whose Nietzsche als Philosoph (1902) interpreted Nietzsche philosophy as an extension of

---

<sup>2</sup> David Farrell Krell, "Analysis" in Nietzsche: The Will to Power as Art (vol. 1) by Martin Heidegger, trans. Krell (New York: Harper and Row, 1979) 238.

<sup>3</sup> J. Hollingdale, Nietzsche (London: ARK, 1985) 196.



his own "philosophy of as-if (Die Philosophie des Als-Ob)."<sup>4</sup> However, Nietzsche's appeal was more as a exemplary personality admired by those who wanted something new and rejected bourgeois German life in seeking a regeneration of German culture. Nietzsche first became a legendary figure in the hands of Stefan Georg (1868-1933).<sup>5</sup> Georg played a role in the late nineteenth century German literary revival and restoration of German lyric poetry. Against modern mass society, Georg instituted an elitist cult of the artist.<sup>6</sup> Two of the most important figures in early Nietzsche literature were disciples of the Georg circle: Ernst Bertram and Ludwig Klages.<sup>7</sup> Bertram's very influential Nietzsche: Versuch einer Mythologie (1918) was concerned with Nietzsche's individuality, not his philosophy.<sup>8</sup> Bertram, in a chapter titled "German Becoming" added Nietzsche to a lineage that began with Luther, and ran through Novalis, Hölderlin, and Lessing to Nietzsche as unique individuals

---

<sup>4</sup> Georg Brandes, "Aristokratischer Radikalismus" in 90 Jahre Philosophische Nietzsche Rezeption, ed. Alfredo Guzzoni (Königstein/Ts: Hain, 1979) 1-15; Hans Vaihinger, "Nietzsche's Wille zum Schein" 90 Jahre 25-28.

<sup>5</sup> Walter Kaufmann 9.

<sup>6</sup> Hajo Holborn 401-404.

<sup>7</sup> Kaufmann 12.

<sup>8</sup> Kaufmann 12.

who embodied a German essence.<sup>9</sup> Bertram dominated discussion of Nietzsche in the 20s and 30s.<sup>10</sup> He portrayed a Nietzsche that was "the typically ambiguous one," a duality whose contradictions made any systematic or contextual analysis unnecessary.<sup>11</sup> In the process of legend-making Bertram discarded parts of Nietzsche's thought, especially that of the Eternal Return. Nietzsche's philosophy was buried under the emphasis on his prophecy and his personal life, particularly his insanity, a factor that remains even in later readers like Jaspers (1936) and Bataille (1945). For the Georg circle Nietzsche was not only a legend but one who had predicted Germany's conditions after World War I and stood as its judge, pointing the way to a cultural revaluation.<sup>12</sup> Along with the Kulturphilosophie, and its emphasis on Nietzsche as Immoralist, Anti-Christ, and the Overman, developed the reading of Nietzsche as a philosopher of Life and the search for new values immanent in life rather than transcendent.<sup>13</sup> Here, Ludwig Klages ("Die psychologischen Errungenschaften Friedrich Nietzsches -- Ein

---

<sup>9</sup> Krell, "Analysis" Nietzsche (vol. 1) 239 and "Analysis," in Nietzsche: Nihilism (vol. 4) by Martin Heidegger (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987) 265.

<sup>10</sup> Krell, "Analysis," in Nietzsche: Will to Power as Knowledge and as Metaphysics (vol. 3) by Martin Heidegger (New York: Harper and Row, 1987) 273.

<sup>11</sup> Cited in Kaufmann 74; Kaufmann 13.

<sup>12</sup> Krell, "Analysis" Nietzsche (vol. 1) 240.

<sup>13</sup> Guzzoni, "Vorwart" in 90 Jahre viii.

Selbstbericht," 1920) provided a different reading of Nietzsche as a psychologist and of the Will to Power as the biological basis of psychological drives. Klages called Nietzsche the founder of modern psychology.<sup>14</sup> Nietzsche's psychological achievement is described as delineating the battle between the ascetic and the Dionysian, although his Will to Power remains trapped in the ascetic -- "dieses grösste Fesselnsprenger der Menschheit selber ein Gefesselter war."<sup>15</sup> Klages valorizes the Dionysian, developing a philosophy of "orgiastics" that, according to D.F. Krell, exalted life with "even wilder abandon than Zarathustra."<sup>16</sup>

Alfred Bäumler, professor of philosophy in Berlin from 1933-1945 began the metaphysical interpretation of Nietzsche in the 1930s with his Nietzsche.<sup>17</sup> Bäumler argued that Nietzsche's important work was his notes "edited" into The Will to Power as his intended magnum opus, not the works

<sup>14</sup> Henri F. Ellenberger 272. Klages own psychology had affinities to Nietzsche, especially in his notion that consciousness carried out only what the unconscious had begun -- the building of images. The intellect "turns into stone" through concepts. Klages "nimmt ... leidenschaftlich die Partei des bewusstlos-bildenden Lebens, gegen die der bewussten Wissenschaft, des bewussten Geistes, des Willens zur Unterwerfung der Natur." (Cited in Heinrich Schmidt, Philosophisches Wörterbuch (Leipzig: Alfred Kröner Verlag, 1934) 331).

<sup>15</sup> Krell, "Analysis" Nietzsche (vol. 1) 242. Quote cited in Guzzoni 32.

<sup>16</sup> Krell, "Analysis" Nietzsche (vol. 1) 242

<sup>17</sup> Krell, "Analysis" Nietzsche (vol. 4) 269; Guzzoni viii.

published during Nietzsche's lifetime. Bäumler rejects the Eternal Return because it impresses being on becoming and contradicts the system of the Will to Power -- the Eternal Return "cancels" eternal becoming.<sup>18</sup> Bäumler rejects both Klages' psycho-biologistic interpretation and Bertram's mythologizing, presenting Nietzsche as the last great thinker of the West.<sup>19</sup> He argues for a systematic interpretation of Nietzsche's work as metaphysics. In the 1930s and 40s Bäumler was the authority on Nietzsche, whose commentary accompanied most of Nietzsche's published works during this period. As a leading Nietzsche scholar Bäumler did a great deal of damage to Nietzsche's later reputation by claiming him for the Nazis (Nietzsche und der Nationalsozialismus, 1934), explaining away Nietzsche's anti Germanism and assimilating him into the German "spirit," presenting Nietzsche and Hitler as "joint" opponents of democratic-parliamentarian bourgeois society.<sup>20</sup> Both Klages

---

<sup>18</sup> Bäumler, "Der Wille als Macht," in 90 Jahre (ed. Guzzoni) 52: "[der ewigen Wiederkunft] ... das Bild des ewigen Werdens aufzuheben und ein Bild des ewigen Seins an die Stelle zu setzen. ... Indem der Begriff der ewigen Wiederkunft erscheint, verschwindet der heraklitische Charakter der Welt."

<sup>19</sup> David Farrell Krell, "Analysis" Nietzsche (vol. 3) 269.

<sup>20</sup> David Farrell Krell "Analysis" Nietzsche (vol. 4) 271.

and Bäumler exalt part of Nietzsche at the expense of the whole.<sup>21</sup>

Jaspers, Heidegger, and Karl Löwith belong to the same general period as Bäumler, and all reject his efforts to assimilate Nietzsche into National Socialism.<sup>22</sup> For Löwith, Nietzsche is also a systematic philosopher, the key to whom is nihilism -- bounded by the death of God and man's homelessness and the "self-surmounting of nihilism in eternal return."<sup>23</sup> Jaspers' and Heidegger's approaches to Nietzsche are both guided by their own philosophies. Thus Jaspers' Nietzsche is a precursor to existentialism and Heidegger's Nietzsche is the last metaphysician whose philosophy ended metaphysics.<sup>24</sup> Here, Nietzsche is the last because in interpreting Truth as an error he is still

---

<sup>21</sup> Karl Löwith, From Hegel to Nietzsche (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1967) 190: "In his ingenious aversion to will and spirit, Klages divides Nietzsche and declares him to be an 'orgiastic' philosopher of the 'body' and the 'soul,' retaining the Nietzsche of the Dionysian philosophy at the expense of the Will to Power and to nothingness. In his desire for battle, Bäumler interprets Nietzsche of the Will to Power and to nothingness as an "heroic realist" and political philosopher at the expense of the Dionysian philosophy of Eternal Return."

<sup>22</sup> By 1934 Heidegger had resigned his rectorship of the University of Freiburg and had become increasingly critical of Nazi ideology (See Krell, "Introduction" to Heidegger's Basic Writings (New York: Harper and row, 1977) 29).

<sup>23</sup> Löwith 192.

<sup>24</sup> Kaufmann wryly says of Heidegger that it is "one of the major efforts -- certainly the bulkiest one -- of the later Heidegger: important for those who want to understand Heidegger" (Kaufmann 500).

identifying truth with the metaphysical project of truth as correctness, at the same time revealing the emptiness of that project. Thus for Heidegger as well, Nietzsche opens a new way -- that of the renewed questioning of the Being of beings (Heidegger's lectures, although presented during this period, were not published until 1961). Jaspers' interpretation extends elements of the Lebensphilosophie attributed to Nietzsche. Nietzsche "obeys a dialectic without realizing it" by living through it. He is the "sacrifice" whose insanity is a symbol for the total risk of himself in the identification with absolute negativity.<sup>25</sup> Yet, Nietzsche's negation of transcendence brings about its own reappearance. His thoughts intentionally contradict themselves in a self-consuming philosophy that cannot be transmitted, only experienced. Nietzsche's will to say Yes opens the way for the philosophy of Existenz -- the authentic knowledge of existence.<sup>26</sup>

Heidegger's Nietzsche is very significant to recent postmodern interpretations of Nietzsche, most of which are counter interpretations to his. Before considering Heidegger I want to bring attention to one other interesting aspect of Nietzsche's early reception in the context of Nietzsche as culture critic. This is the New Morality movement within

---

<sup>25</sup> Karl Jaspers, Nietzsche (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1965) 447.

<sup>26</sup> Jaspers 443.

German feminism in turn of the century Germany. For most of this first generation of readers, Nietzsche's misogyny was taken for granted -- Nietzsche was the "Frauenfeind."<sup>27</sup> However, within the feminist movement a form of radical feminism developed that was based on new libertarian ideals of sexual morality.<sup>28</sup>

Helen Stöcker was the primary founder of this movement and she conceded that Nietzsche was the dominant early influence on the New Morality (Die neue Ethik) she espoused, refuting the common belief that Nietzsche was anti-female.<sup>29</sup> She argued that Nietzsche taught women to be spiritually independent, reject a narrow bourgeois existence, and break free of existing convention through self-conquest and the liberation of their individual creative powers. By 1903 she was against marriage, arguing that "he taught them to reject the old conventions of sexual morality as well as the old restrictions of their role in life."<sup>30</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup> Ellen Kennedy 181; R. Hinton Thomas, Nietzsche in German Politics and Society 1890-1918 (La Salle: Open Court, 1983) 83.

<sup>28</sup> Richard Evans, The Feminist Movement in Germany 1894-1933 (London and Beverly Hills: SAGE Publications, 1976) 115.

<sup>29</sup> Evans 117. That Nietzsche was influential in the New Morality is apparent not only from the writings of Helen Stöcker, but from her opponents, who blamed Nietzsche as the "villain" and his revaluation of values as the source of their excesses (Thomas 84-85).

<sup>30</sup> Evans 119

This was an extension of feminism into women's personal lives which called for women to prescribe their own scale of values and placed more emphasis on the fulfillment of a woman's nature -- especially her biological nature -- than on social roles or political equality.<sup>31</sup> The New Morality sponsored homes for unwed mothers, abortion, free love, contraception, and the idea that marriage was a form of prostitution. According to Hinton Thomas in his chapter "The Feminist Movement and Nietzsche," Helen Stöcker was "the most Nietzsche-oriented and most intelligent exponent of this hoped for ethical revolution."<sup>32</sup> Stöcker was a major mediator for Nietzsche within the feminist movement, but most knew about him mainly by hearsay as the author of Zarathustra.<sup>33</sup>

In 1904 a Mothers' League (Mutterschutz) was formed (for unmarried mothers) based on the New Morality, and Stöcker played a prominent role.<sup>34</sup> The New Morality and the Mothers' League polarized the women's movement and aroused a great deal of hostility.<sup>35</sup> In 1909 Mutterschutz was rejected

---

<sup>31</sup> Thomas 88; Evans 138.

<sup>32</sup> Thomas 87.

<sup>33</sup> Thomas 91.

<sup>34</sup> Evans 122.

<sup>35</sup> Evans 137.



by the general organization for German women's groups.<sup>36</sup>

Temporarily liberalism, Social Darwinism, and Nietzsche were combined in an ideology that blended the most libertarian and individualist elements of each.<sup>37</sup>

These elements could not remain combined for long. The social and national aspects of Social Darwinism and Nietzschean individualism were ultimately inimical to each other. By 1915 Social Darwinism was the chief force in Mutterschutz.<sup>38</sup> The emphasis on woman's fulfillment of her nature as biology developed into a concern for the race, and Helen Stöcker would say that the care for the coming race was the driving force of Mutterschutz (adding that this was a different orientation than Nietzsche's).<sup>39</sup>

The combination of Nietzsche with Social Darwinism by the proponents of the New Morality shows an opportunistic use of Nietzsche's "woman." If they rejected the supposed misogyny of Nietzsche's texts, they failed to heed his arguments against essentialism and identity, and thus assimilated "woman" to a biological conception of her nature -- one that was coopted by a masculine demographic, even racist, politics. This early attempt to make use of

---

<sup>36</sup> Thomas 83.

<sup>37</sup> Evans 138.

<sup>38</sup> Thomas 92.

<sup>39</sup> Thomas 92.

Nietzsche's affirmative "woman" failed because the radical implications in Nietzsche's texts could not yet be read. The only mode of interpretation available to them was that of Nietzsche as culture critic, the champion of "selfhood"<sup>40</sup> who appealed to a generation concerned with Individualität and Persönlichkeit.<sup>41</sup>

In Wilhelmine Germany Nietzsche was adopted by those who resisted conformity, while among nationalists he was unpopular and associated with moral degeneracy -- although various "mottos" were lifted from Nietzsche's texts.<sup>42</sup> Ironically, Nietzsche would later be adopted by a different set of nationalists -- National Socialists -- who gathered arguments against ideas of a democratic order and found ways to press Nietzsche into service with the aid of Nietzsche's sister and her control of the Nietzsche archives.<sup>43</sup> Nietzsche's Will to Power was afterwards understood in a political sense.<sup>44</sup> Nietzsche as metaphysician and as "politiker" appeared together in the readings by Bäumler. The Will to Power came to be associated with political

---

<sup>40</sup> Thomas 80.

<sup>41</sup> Thomas 2.

<sup>42</sup> Thomas 126, 128.

<sup>43</sup> Walter Kaufmann, in his chapter titled "The Master Race" accuses Nazi authors, including Bäumler, of unscrupulousness as Nietzsche-readers, abandoning scholarship in taking remarks out of context.

<sup>44</sup> Hollingdale 198.

power, especially by those not directly familiar with Nietzsche's writing. It is in this environment that Heidegger began his lecture course on Nietzsche.

Because Heidegger's lectures were not published until 1961, modern readings of Nietzsche date from Walter Kaufmann and his effort to free a "basically anti-political" Nietzsche from his association with Nazism.<sup>45</sup> Kaufmann's Nietzsche (first published in 1950) was the authoritative Nietzsche, especially for English-speaking readers. Kaufmann had made it acceptable after World War II to read Nietzsche again. He dominated the field of Nietzsche scholarship and was responsible for most of the available English translations. Kaufmann, along with his contemporaries Arthur Danto (who tried to assimilate Nietzsche to analytic philosophy) and J.P. Stern, reads Nietzsche as a systematic philosopher. Kaufmann's reading resolves Nietzsche's self-contradiction and paradox according to an internal unity, in which contradictions are only temporary stopping places. Nietzsche's aphorisms are for Kaufmann ultimately unified by their character as "thought experiments" striving for an adequate means of expression for getting at "the objects themselves" in which self-overcoming, not ambiguity, is the key.<sup>46</sup> Kaufmann complained of Bertram that he "failed to see

---

<sup>45</sup> Kaufmann 412.

<sup>46</sup> Kaufmann 85.

that the self-contradictions [were] merely the stuff of legend and not typical of Nietzsche's thought."<sup>47</sup> He assigned Nietzsche a place in "the grand tradition of Western thought" and claimed that the core of Nietzsche's thought was the Will to Power, which was not a metaphysical concept but a psychological hypothesis inseparable from his concept of sublimation.<sup>48</sup> However, Kaufmann rejects what his reading of Nietzsche cannot account for -- the "dubious doctrine" of the Eternal Return and most particularly "woman."

For Kaufmann as for the other readers of Nietzsche considered so far, "woman" is not regarded as a significant aspect of his philosophy.<sup>49</sup> It is tempting to correlate this with a more general belief that women are not important and that even a supposed misogyny can be ignored -- the irony is that it is not there. If Kaufmann feels obliged to at least note Nietzsche's remarks and account for them because by the 1950s they may have become increasingly embarrassing, it is still only to dismiss them as having any bearing on what Nietzsche "means." Kaufmann fails to see the significance of Nietzsche's "woman" and reads her right out of his interpretation. According to Kaufmann,

---

<sup>47</sup> Kaufmann 14.

<sup>48</sup> Kaufmann 204.

<sup>49</sup> One exception is Karl Reinhardt (See page 30, above).

Nietzsche's writings contain many all too human judgements -- especially about women -- but these are philosophically irrelevant; and ad hominem arguments against any philosophy on the basis of such statements seems trivial and hardly pertinent. ... Nietzsche's prejudices about women need not greatly concern the philosopher.<sup>50</sup>

This is also the result of neglecting the importance of style, and establishing a split between the philosophical and the poetic Nietzsche. Kaufmann has had many students, but two in particular have distinguished themselves as Nietzsche scholars -- J. Hollingdale and Alexander Nehamas. Interestingly enough, they have opposite reactions to Kaufmann's "neglect" of style. Hollingdale adopts Kaufmann's point of view and claims that Nietzsche's importance is in his philosophy -- poetry is secondary.<sup>51</sup> Nehamas, on the other hand, rejects this view, arguing that Nietzsche's many styles are a part of his perspectivism. The multiplicity of style attempts to suggest that there is no single neutral language and to undermine the distinction between form and content. Nietzsche avoids dogmatism in refusing to privilege his authorial voice and in presenting his ideas as

---

<sup>50</sup> Kaufmann 84. Yet what are we to make of Kaufmann's biographical remark about Nietzsche's intolerable situation in which it is known "how Nietzsche felt about being condemned to live in a fatherless household, alone with 5 women ..." This perhaps says more about Kaufmann's rejection of the place of "woman" and her supposed irrelevance than about Nietzsche's text.

<sup>51</sup> Hollingdale 203.

interpretations.<sup>52</sup> It is significant that there is a generational difference between Hollingdale and Nehamas, the latter representing more recent interpretative attempts in Nietzsche reading that refuse the traditional split between philosophy and literature.

The most recent phase of Nietzsche interpretation is language oriented, paying as much, if not more, attention to Nietzsche as a writer and his techniques for "unmasking" truth, language, and thought. The key to these readings is the experience of nihilism, which Heidegger in the 1930s was the first to take seriously. Although many disagree with Heidegger's interpretation, contemporary interpretations owe a great deal to him and his intuition that the horizon of nihilism was fundamental. That God is dead means all eternal standards are gone by which truth and language traditionally functioned or can be measured. As Daniel O'Hara says in his introduction to Why Nietzsche Now?, "this most recent appearance by Nietzsche has been as the linguistic pathologist of the diverse signs of nihilism which are constitutive of the entire tradition of Western culture from the age of the Greeks."<sup>53</sup> This new valorization of language and writing since the 1960s comes from revisionary readings

---

<sup>52</sup> Alexander Nehamas 20-40.

<sup>53</sup> Daniel O'Hara, "Introduction," Why Nietzsche Now? (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985) vii-viii.

of Heidegger's reading of Nietzsche -- therefore, it is necessary to turn to Heidegger's Nietzsche.

Recalling that Heidegger began his lectures against the background of Bäumler's interpretations, it is interesting to note the similarities between them. Like Bäumler, Heidegger based his interpretation on the collection of notes under the title The Will to Power. Also like Bäumler, Heidegger interpreted the Eternal Return as the impression of being on becoming, although Heidegger does not reject the Eternal Return but argues for the unity of the Nietzschean themes of the Will to Power, the Eternal Return, and the Revaluation of Values. Heidegger also uses Nietzsche's note §617 in Will to Power similarly: taking the first line "To impose upon becoming the character of being -- that is the supreme will to power" out of context without considering that the rest of the note does not bear out the meaning attributed to it.<sup>54</sup> Thus the Eternal Return becomes the fundamental metaphysical position of Nietzsche -- "being as a whole is Will to Power, and being as a whole is Eternal Return of the same."<sup>55</sup> Heidegger argues that this conjunction of the Will to Power and Eternal Return in Nietzsche's thought returns philosophy full circle to the Greeks -- being is and being becomes -- in such a way that

---

<sup>54</sup> Heidegger, Nietzsche (vol. 2) 201.

<sup>55</sup> Heidegger, Nietzsche (vol. 2) 198.

Being "as such" is identified solely with the beingness of beings as what is present and what is purely actual. Heidegger assumes that Being, however enigmatic his own attempt to think Being, "is" prior to and separate from man as being. He regards traditional metaphysics as the study of beings, which has always taken Being apriori and thus never questioned Being as Being. Nietzsche brings metaphysics then to its furthest development because there is no longer any possibility for the question of Being separate from beings themselves. Nietzsche "fails" to reach the thought of Being as such. Heidegger betrays a longing, an "if only," for a return to origins where Being is again possible as a question and as a promise -- no longer forgotten in "beings." The secret of Being is a deep truth, the "unthought" horizon of cultural existence that man must think more authentically. Rather than an overcoming that tries to control, the overcoming of metaphysics ought to be a "step back," a thinking that "no longer omits Being but admits it: admits it into the originary, revealing unconcealment of Being, which is Being itself."<sup>56</sup>

Although clearly influenced by Bäumler, Heidegger has his own reasons for relegating Nietzsche to metaphysics. Heidegger reads Nietzsche as bringing Nihilism to its furthest development by reducing Being to value and will:

---

<sup>56</sup> Heidegger, Nietzsche (vol. 3) 227.



"Thought in terms of the essence of nihilism, Nietzsche's overcoming is merely the fulfillment of nihilism."<sup>57</sup> There is not only nothing to Being itself, but nothing to beings as well. Nietzsche's nihilism is an unauthentic nihilism that does not know itself as such because it omits thinking the essence of nihilism, the "default" of Being. This default is Heidegger's way of speaking of Being as neither pure presence nor pure absence but paradoxically both -- a default that is at the same time a giving, a promise. Being has historically withdrawn, yet leaves behind a place -- DaSein -- in which presence and absence occur together in a place that defines the essence of man. Nietzsche's nihilism deals with actual nihilism but not with essential nihilism. The essence of Truth -- man's relationship to Being -- is abandoned for the principle of value, leading to what Heidegger sees as having opened the way for planetary dominion by machination and technology -- both the result of an "unconditioned anthropomorphism" and a destructive will to power.<sup>58</sup> Heidegger's concern, expressed in his essay "Nihilism and the History of Being" in volume 3 of Krell's translation, is against a "metaphysics of subjectivity" for which technology has become an anonymous force that has gained control and turned nature into a "standing reserve" to the point of including man himself as a mere object for

---

<sup>57</sup> Heidegger, Nietzsche (vol. 3) 219.

<sup>58</sup> Heidegger, Nietzsche (vol. 3) 174.

use.<sup>59</sup> In arguing that there is no meaning to life in itself except what man himself puts there, Nietzsche wills man's homelessness as such -- meaninglessness is now the only thing that "makes sense."<sup>60</sup>

Heidegger's interpretation of Nietzsche puts an odd spin to Nietzsche's writing. It willfully seems to ignore the similarity between Nietzsche's thoughts and Heidegger's. It may be that Heidegger was unwilling to credit Nietzsche with having preceded him in his own insights. The similarity becomes clear in the context of Heidegger's paradoxical thinking of Being. Being is described by Heidegger as "not" -- not presence but a withdrawal that in withdrawing "remains in view," a duplicitous revealing/concealing self-veiled gift that promises Being itself.<sup>61</sup> Being itself stays away:

Thus matters stand with the concealment of Being in such a way that the concealment conceals itself in itself. The staying away of Being is Being itself in this very default. ... In its default Being veils itself with itself. This veil that vanishes for itself, which is the way Being itself essentially occurs in default, is the nothing as Being itself.<sup>62</sup>

---

<sup>59</sup> Heidegger, Nietzsche (vol. 3) 242; 248. See also "The Question Concerning Technology," in Basic Writings 298.

<sup>60</sup> Heidegger, Nietzsche (vol. 3) 173.

<sup>61</sup> Krell, "Analysis" Nietzsche (vol. 4) 261; Heidegger, Nietzsche (vol. 4) 215.

<sup>62</sup> Heidegger, Nietzsche (vol. 4) 214.

Being as such is other than itself, so  
decisively other that it even "is" not.<sup>63</sup>

But Being as withdrawn gift, as self-veiled, is precisely where we encounter Nietzsche's "woman," and precisely the point at which Derrida turns Nietzsche against Heidegger. Nietzsche's woman " ... 'give themselves,' even when they -- give themselves."<sup>64</sup> Further, as David Farrell Krell says, "If the 1936-37 lectures on will to power as art overlook woman, those on eternal recurrence neglect Dionysos; the two omissions ... are perhaps not unrelated."<sup>65</sup> The Eternal Return is a matter of the moment - - the wedding of chance and necessity -- in which eternity is always decided. In other words, Eternal Return is time as transition, and very close to Heidegger's notion in Being and Time of ecstatic temporality -- time as transition as such.<sup>66</sup> In the Eternal Return, "Nothing ends; all begins again, the other is still the same, midnight is only a covered-over noon, and the highest noon is the abyss of

---

<sup>63</sup> Heidegger, Nietzsche (vol. 4) 215.

<sup>64</sup> Nietzsche §361. Translated by Kaufmann, the line reads "That they "put on something" even when they take off everything" (317). In a footnote he gives the original German: "Dass sie "sich geben," selbst noch, wenn sie -- sich geben." Derrida relies on the original. The "scare quotes" indicate a duplicity.

<sup>65</sup> Krell, "Analysis," Nietzsche (vol. 2) 275.

<sup>66</sup> Krell, "Analysis," Nietzsche (vol. 2) 278.

light from which we can never escape."<sup>67</sup> The Apollonian noon as absolute presence and Zarathustra's noon as the sign of Eternal Return are impossible to separate, indicating Nietzsche's problematization of his own thought in the vicious circle. In the Eternal Return beings are not beings as selves as Heidegger would have it, but have no continuous given identity. One finds that one is always already other -- Nietzsche and Heidegger would seem to be standing on the edge of the same abyss. Several of the readers of Heidegger's Nietzsche have commented on the difficulty of separating one from the other -- whether it is Heidegger's Nietzsche or Nietzsche's Heidegger that is being read.

Martin Heidegger, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Jacques Derrida, Paul Ricouer, Jacques Lacan, Sarah Kofman, and Michel Foucault are some contemporary philosophical and literary figures interested in language who have all been influential in the study of rhetoric -- and who have all been influenced by Nietzsche.<sup>68</sup> The editors of Nietzsche's rhetorical works argue that in Nietzsche's use of Ciceronian rhetoric to attack nineteenth century philosophy "it is possible that Nietzsche, like the Sophists and the Italian Renaissance Humanists, has been responsible for a historical reversal of

---

<sup>67</sup> Maurice Blanchot, "The Limits of Experience: Nihilism" in The New Nietzsche 126.

<sup>68</sup> Sander L. Gilman, Carole Blair, David J. Parent, eds., "Introduction" to Friedrich Nietzsche on Rhetoric and Language xxi.

the intellectual (or possibly a reunion) of these two historically competitive fields."<sup>69</sup> It is also remarkable that so much of the "new Nietzsche" that has taken the "linguistic turn" has been the creation of French thinkers. In part, this is the result of the death of Walter Kaufmann, which left a vacuum in the control of Nietzsche scholarship, and in part the result of the development of a French school of Nietzsche interpretation that moved away from Heidegger in primarily two, not unrelated, directions: deconstruction and archeological/genealogical.<sup>70</sup> The name "Derrida" signifies the former and the name "Foucault" the latter within Nietzschean interpretation, with a third figure in Giles Deleuze, whose Nietzsche interpretation is not assimilative to either direction but certainly operates in the same trajectory. The projects of all three could be said to be an extension of the questions Nietzsche poses in a passage from Daybreak:

Subsequent questions -- whenever a person reveals something, one can ask: what is it supposed to conceal? From what is it supposed to divert the eyes? What prejudice is it supposed to arouse? And additionally: how far does the subtlety of this dissimulation go? and in what way has it failed?<sup>71</sup>

---

<sup>69</sup> Gilman xii.

<sup>70</sup> See Tracy Strong, Friedrich Nietzsche and the Politics of Transfiguration (London: University of California Press Ltd, 1988) 311; Guzzoni x; O'Hara viii; Gilman xvii.

<sup>71</sup> Nietzsche, Daybreak, trans. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) §523.

All three are anti-systematic, anti-humanist (in the metaphysical, hermeneutical sense), and anti-representational. Common to all three as well is an interdisciplinary hybrid approach, one that refuses to confine itself to traditional academic divisions or the conventional methods of philosophy but annexes new contexts and methods from other fields. All three are concerned in some form with the discourse of "woman." Woman appears in their texts in a Nietzschean valorization of "woman" that turns on what has been left out of or "other" to traditional philosophical discourse in order to disrupt the concepts of logic, truth, and presence. Alice Jardine has suggested a neologism for this proliferation of the metaphor "woman" with her Nietzschean attributes: gynesis --

the putting into discourse of "woman" as that process diagnosed in France as intrinsic to the condition of modernity; indeed, the valorization of the feminine, woman, and her obligatory, that is historical, connotations, as somehow intrinsic to new and necessary modes of thinking, writing, speaking.<sup>72</sup>

In the wake of Nietzsche's announcement of the end of man and his description of the subject as a fiction, all three also reinterpret the western Cartesian notion of the human subject, rejecting the notion of the transparent self-consciousness of the individual subject with the aim of eliminating the subject as the privileged center of truth,

---

<sup>72</sup> Alice Jardine 25. This valorization is the subject of the following chapter.

knowing, language and power. Just as Nietzsche displaced the will from the conscious control of the individual to the in-between anonymity of the play of forces, these writers emphasize the unconscious aspects of language and power. They turn to the investigation of where and how the invention of the subject developed.

In The Gay Science Nietzsche asks:

"Where could you find a history of love, of avarice, of envy, of conscience, of pious respect for tradition, or of cruelty? Even a comparative history of law or at least of punishment is so far lacking completely.<sup>73</sup>

Here can be seen in embryonic form the projects of Michel Foucault, some of which include Discipline and Punish, The History of Sexuality, The Archeology of Knowledge, and The Order of Things. Foucault uses Nietzsche's genealogy as a research strategy, an approach to history that emphasizes discontinuities and arbitrariness rather than continuous, progressive development. Foucault rejects universals, intentionality, and the search for hidden meanings. He takes up Nietzsche's rejection of both the "true" and "apparent" worlds for the surface play of interpretation, in which everything is already an interpretation. Genealogy is against the search for origins and causes. It looks instead for "the details and accidents that accompany every

---

<sup>73</sup> Nietzsche, The Gay Science §7.

beginning."<sup>74</sup> Foucault refuses causal explanations -- social practises and customs are instead studied as "sign chains" of ever new interpretations, transformations, and ruptures.<sup>75</sup> History is a matter of relations of force and domination, in which Foucault looks for the local strategies of power and the forms of knowledge that enable them to operate. Nietzsche's attack on the "will to truth" as a disguised form of the will to power is important to Foucault's understanding of the interrelationship of power and knowledge and his use of history as a means to engage in local struggles against reified interpretations. The body itself is changed and defined by cultural practices and interpretation. Foucault rejected along with Nietzsche the idea of the subject, which becomes for Foucault the locus of institutional practices within the discourse of a particular society. Thus an interpretation is required of how we came to be constituted as subjects. Foucault never explicitly refers to "woman" but her Nietzschean attribute as "distance itself" occupies a significant place in his work, that of the play of forces "made possible by the space which defines

---

<sup>74</sup> Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in Foucault Reader ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984) 80.

<sup>75</sup> Paul Bove, "Mendacious Innocents, or, The Modern Genealogist as Conscientious Intellectual: Nietzsche, Foucault, Said" in Why Nietzsche Now? 382.



them."<sup>76</sup> This interaction of forces has, in Foucault's words, a place of confrontation that is "as Nietzsche demonstrates ... a "non place," a pure distance [or] interstice " in which is staged "the endlessly repeated play of domination."<sup>77</sup>

Part of Foucault's Nietzscheanism comes by way of Georges Bataille (1897-1962), a reader of Nietzsche in the 1930s and 40s who has had a great deal of importance to postmodern thought, although less studied than Heidegger. Foucault himself proclaims Bataille "one of the most important writers of this century."<sup>78</sup> Bataille is a strange interpreter of Nietzsche, in fact, his commentary Sur Nietzsche (1945) is largely autobiographical, because Bataille feels that to write "on" Nietzsche would be to turn him into a dead object of knowledge.<sup>79</sup> Bataille is a "post structuralist"<sup>80</sup> already in the post war period, whose works combine Nietzsche with Sade's radically sovereign individual in playing with notions of excess, transgression and

---

<sup>76</sup> Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982) 109.

<sup>77</sup> Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" 85.

<sup>78</sup> Cited in Allan Megill 188.

<sup>79</sup> Denis Hollier, Against Architecture: The Writings of Georges Bataille, trans. Betsy Wing (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1989) 26.

<sup>80</sup> Hollier ix.

perversity -- the breaking of taboos and his writing of the sacred as a fusion of sex, violence, obscenity, and spirituality. A general relationship to the work of Bataille can be seen in Derrida's association of writing with the erotic and the endless play of signifiers and in Foucault's study of architectures (Discipline and Punish), the body, and transgression. Bataille was concerned with writing as something non-representational, non-privileged, transgressive, and heterogeneous. He rejected fixed meanings, form, unity, being, transcendence, purpose, and morality for the affirmation of non-sense, even insanity (Bataille was drawn to Nietzsche's insanity as the sacrifice of an extreme individual). In Bataille "woman", especially as Krell's configuration of woman/sensuality/death is not postponed, and she appears in the form of the labyrinth and Ariadne's thread, both major motifs of Bataille's work. Bataille writes that he sees Nietzsche's theme as that of the total man and the problem of action. All action is particular and limiting, subordinating the individual's total character to a particular result.<sup>81</sup> The problem is then to transcend action: "Life remains whole only when not subordinated to a precise object which transcends it. Totality in this sense is essentially freedom."<sup>82</sup> Freedom

---

<sup>81</sup> Georges Bataille, "On Nietzsche: The Will to Chance" October 36 (1986): 52.

<sup>82</sup> Bataille 52.

becomes the freedom from all constraint and taboo, and thus associated with evil. Bataille admires Nietzsche's assessment of the value of evil, even referring to Nietzsche as "the philosopher of evil."<sup>83</sup> Such abandonment is available only to the individual in extremis, and is reflected in Bataille's reading of Nietzsche's will to power as the Will to Chance and the Eternal Return as pure aimlessness -- the rejection of all goals and solutions for total risk.

Of the three "versions" of current Nietzschean interpretation I have taken as paradigmatic, Giles Deleuze offers the most systematic -- systematic, however, in a deceptive sense. Deleuze's Nietzsche and Philosophy is based on an analysis of the dualisms of active and reactive in Nietzsche's thought in relation to those of affirmation and negation. Nietzsche's Eternal Return becomes the synthesis of active and reactive forces and the Will to Power its synthetic principle -- a system "as rigorous as the Kantian one," which transmutes nihilism and becomes the power of affirming.<sup>84</sup> Affirmation, to be unconditional, requires its own affirmation. Ariadne is the affirmative woman, the first positive feminine power, whose purpose in the system as

---

<sup>83</sup> Bataille 50.

<sup>84</sup> Giles Deleuze, Nietzsche and Philosophy, trans. Hugh Tomlinson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983) 68-70.

Dionysus' fiancée is this unconditional affirmation.<sup>85</sup> The paradox here is that Deleuze, a philosopher of difference like Derrida and Foucault, applies a traditional systematic strategy to Nietzsche interpretation in which Nietzsche's work becomes a philosophy of will.<sup>86</sup> However, Deleuze uses this dualistic analysis as a strategic principle, a temporary construction or "story" that can be abandoned nomadically --

an explanation that works by redescribing events so that they fit into a particular story put together for a particular practical purpose in a particular situation.<sup>87</sup>

In Nietzsche and Philosophy this purpose is to use Nietzsche to reject Hegelian dialectics and replace them with an affirmation of difference rather than its negation:

The eternal return is this highest power, the synthesis of affirmation which finds its principle in the will. The lightness of that which affirms against the weight of the negative; the games of the will to power against the labor of the dialectic; the affirmation of affirmation against that famous negation of the negation.<sup>88</sup>

In "Nomadic Thought" Deleuze describes Nietzsche as the dawn of counterculture -- the refusal of codification and

---

<sup>85</sup> Deleuze 186. For Ariadne as the "first positive feminine power," the "feminine power emancipated" see Deleuze 14-20.

<sup>86</sup> Hugh Tomlinson, "Nietzsche on the Edge of Town: Deleuze and Reflexivity" in Exceedingly Nietzsche (London and New York: Routledge, 1988) 151.

<sup>87</sup> Tomlinson 159.

<sup>88</sup> Deleuze 197.

the notion of style as politics.<sup>89</sup> Deleuze applies the term nomadic to Nietzsche because it is the nomads who evade the codes of settled peoples:

But if Nietzsche does not belong to philosophy, it is perhaps because he was the first to conceive of another kind of discourse as counter-philosophy. This discourse is above all nomadic; its statement can be conceived as the products of a mobile war machine and not the utterances of a rational, administrative machinery, whose philosophers would be bureaucrats of pure reason.<sup>90</sup>

Derrida is the reader of Nietzsche whose interpretation is the closest to my own -- the first chapter of this thesis can be regarded as an interpretation of Nietzsche that is also an interpretation of Derrida's Spurs. Against readers who either reject Nietzsche's "woman" as misogynistic, or would ignore her as unworthy of consideration, Derrida takes "woman" to be extremely important to Nietzsche's text. Derrida claims in Spurs that "it is impossible to dissociate the questions of art, style, and truth from the question of woman."<sup>91</sup> He uses "woman" to provide an alternative interpretation to Heidegger's Nietzsche that does not reject Heidegger entirely, as Heidegger's rejection of the metaphysics of presence is crucial to Derrida's own work.

Derrida

---

<sup>89</sup> Deleuze, "Nomadic Thought" 142-143.

<sup>90</sup> Deleuze, "Nomadic Thought" 149.

<sup>91</sup> Jacques Derrida, Spurs 71.

attempts to show that Heidegger's own path of escape from metaphysics could be considered as operative in Nietzsche's text as well. This is done in terms of what Derrida calls the question of the propre.<sup>92</sup>

Propre has connotations of proper-ty -- belonging, owning, giving, taking, mastery, and possession. Derrida's propre is similar to Heidegger's manipulation of Ereignis, Eigentlichkeit, and eigen-en as terms for the mysterious granting of Time and Being that is governed by the duplicity of revealing and concealing, but which is never confronted in Heidegger's interpretation in the figure of the woman in Nietzsche's text.<sup>93</sup> Heidegger's interpretation is shown to be inadequate by its lack of attention to woman. Derrida brings Heidegger into his reading of Nietzsche with Heidegger's interpretation of Nietzsche's "The History of an Error" in Twilight of the Idols.<sup>94</sup> Heidegger's commentary ignores the phrase "it becomes woman" and thus like all philosophy before him fails to realize that together woman and truth have a history -- the eternal feminine that

---

<sup>92</sup> Alan Schrift, "Reading Derrida Reading Heidegger Reading Nietzsche," Research in Phenomenology 14 (1984): 98.

<sup>93</sup> Krell, "A Hermeneutics of Discretion," Research in Phenomenology 15 (1985): 2.

<sup>94</sup> Nietzsche, "How the "Real World" at last Became a Fable," subtitled "The History of an Error," Twilight of the Idols/The Antichrist 40-41. The part in question reads: "The real world, unattainable for the moment, but promised to the wise, the pious, the virtuous man ("to the sinner who repents"). (Progress of the idea: it grows more refined, more enticing, more incomprehensible -- it becomes woman, it becomes Christian ...). The passage ends in "with the real world we have also abolished the apparent world ... Incipit Zarathustra."

Nietzsche's affirmative woman disrupts. Nietzsche's "woman" and Heidegger's ~~Being~~ both have the same essential predicate -- the gift that is a dissimulation, neither a giving nor a taking away. However, where Heidegger's thought of Being ends in "mystery," the primordial absence in all presence, Nietzsche's "woman" has no mystery, no deep secrets. She is all surface, and for Derrida the infinite extension of a chain of signifiers -- there is no Being to be forgotten in the first place.

Spurs is used as part of Derrida's challenge to a hermeneutics which searches for the true meaning of the text in the intention of the author.<sup>95</sup> He attacks Heidegger's hermeneutical claim to know Nietzsche's own "unthought" or what Nietzsche "really" wanted to say which then reads into Nietzsche's text truths about the question of Being that do not fit there. Heidegger's interpretation belongs to hermeneutics because the question of whether Nietzsche merely inverted Platonism, reversing the ideal and the sensual, or exceeded Platonism requires thinking Nietzsche's intended meaning.<sup>96</sup> Derrida's aim in reading instead allows meaning to be produced through the activity of reading rather than finding a meaning already present in the text.

---

<sup>95</sup> Schrift, "Reading" 89-90; 105.

<sup>96</sup> Derrida 83.

By attending to the metaphors of "woman," "truth," and "castration" in Nietzsche's text and their common attributes, Derrida argues that woman is but one name for the untruth of truth.<sup>97</sup> As veiling dissimulation, woman cannot be pinned down -- she neither believes in truth nor castration, nor in their opposites. Derrida refers to this as the heterogeneity of Nietzsche's text -- the absence of a system that would entirely account for Nietzsche's positions on "woman."<sup>98</sup> Truth in Nietzsche's texts is irreducibly plural, and with this plurality reading is "freed from the horizon of meaning, the truth of being."<sup>99</sup> Woman is the question of style, a style more powerful than content. She already knows that the question of the propre (possess/possessed, giving/taking) is undecidable -- that the event of Being is a non-event, and an abyss. And thus Derrida concludes,

A joyful wisdom shows it well: there never has been the style, the simulacrum, the woman. There never has been the sexual difference.<sup>100</sup>

This brings to an end a brief history of Nietzsche's readers at a point -- the refusal of the sexual difference as such -- where a move to another branch of the Nietzschean

---

<sup>97</sup> Derrida 51.

<sup>98</sup> See Chapter I 30.

<sup>99</sup> Derrida 107.

<sup>100</sup> Derrida 139.



interpretative family tree, that of French feminist theory is called for, particularly where "woman" is concerned (although the writers involved in this grouping might be uncomfortable with such a lineage). There are others in the field of Nietzsche interpretation who could be mentioned, particularly Paul DeMan, Maurice Blanchot, and Pierre Klossowski, but the general outlines of recent Nietzsche interpretation should now be clear. The recent proliferation of Nietzsche interpretation has been remarkable and is related to the challenges to traditional methods of interpretation that what is termed deconstruction, poststructuralism, or postmodernism are making. What should also be clear are the political aspects of recent Nietzsche interpretation. Despite Kaufmann's attempt to remove Nietzsche from politics, Nietzsche is ever more used in political battles, although the use to which he is now put is more appropriate than that of earlier periods. Whether it is Foucault's microstruggles against entrenched interpretations and strategies of domination, Deleuze's nomadic war machine, or Derrida's more literary but no less political attack on phallogentrism, Nietzsche is being used as a subversive force against the traditional hegemony of rationalism and rationalist systems of meaning. The writings of the last anti-political German have now become the "politics of style" or the "politics of difference," which have the aim of disrupting all centrist discourses

be they phallo-centric, ethno-centric, theo-centric, anthropo-centric, or logo-centric -- every discourse which tends to create undisturbable limits and order, hegemonic rule, or privileged, hierarchical opposites.<sup>101</sup>

As Nietzsche himself recognized, no one can get more out of his texts than what they bring to them in the first place:

Ultimately, nobody can get more out of things, including books, than he already knows. For what one lacks access to from experience one will have no ear.<sup>102</sup>

---

<sup>101</sup> J.D. Caputo, "Three Transgressions: Nietzsche, Heidegger, Derrida" Research in Phenomenology 15 (1985): 75.

<sup>102</sup> Nietzsche, On the Genealogy of Morals 261.

### CHAPTER III

#### FROM METAPHOR TO THEORY

In the refusal of the sexual difference as such Nietzsche's use of the metaphor "woman" has become important within Derridean deconstruction and the use of deconstructive theory by certain woman theorists in France whose work is only now becoming well known in American academics. For these theoretical writers who would deconstruct even sexual identity, "woman" still functions in the Nietzschean sense in which she "is" no longer the opposite of "man" but the very subversion of the opposition masculinity/femininity:

In "woman" I see something that cannot be represented, something that is not said, something above and beyond nomenclature and ideologies.<sup>1</sup>

Julia Kristeva

If woman has always functioned "within" the discourse of man, a signifier that has always referred back to the opposite signifier ... it is time for her to dislocate this "within," to explode it, turn it around, and seize it, ... biting that tongue with her very own teeth to invent for herself a language to get inside of.<sup>2</sup>

Helene Cixous

---

<sup>1</sup> Julia Kristeva, "Woman can never be defined," New French Feminisms 137.

<sup>2</sup> Helen Cixous, "Laugh of the Medusa," New French Feminisms 257.

[Woman] is neither one nor two ... She renders any definition inadequate. Moreover she has no "proper name."<sup>3</sup>

Whose twisted character is her inability to say what she represents. The quest of the "object" becomes a game of Chinese boxes. Infinitely receding. The most amorphous with regard to ideas, the most obviously "thing," if you like, the most opaque matter, opens upon a mirror all the purer in that it knows and is known to have no reflections.<sup>4</sup> ... But what if the object started to speak?<sup>4</sup>

Luce Irigaray

There is also the voice of Sarah Kofman, who calls for

the end of all oppositions, that of man as well as of woman, to the advantage of a "feminine jouissance," if by feminine one understands undecidable oscillation.<sup>5</sup>

Their concern is with language and the exclusion of women from language and the linguistic system, which they argue has been, in its structure and history, subject to an order that is patrilinear and therefore masculine.<sup>6</sup>

The women theorists -- among whom Luce Irigaray, Helene Cixous, Julia Kristeva, and Sarah Kofman are most prominent -- take as their own starting points the deconstructive

---

<sup>3</sup> Luce Irigaray, "This sex which is not one," New French Feminisms 101.

<sup>4</sup> Luce Irigaray, Speculum of the Other Woman, trans. Gillian C. Gill (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985) 134-135.

<sup>5</sup> Sarah Kofman, quoted in Alice Jardine, Gynesis 140. The word jouissance in French is translated as pleasure, enjoyment, here associated with feminine sexuality and a certain excess.

<sup>6</sup> Gayatri Spivak, "French Feminism in an International Frame," Yale French Studies 62 (1981): 172.

writing of Derrida and/or Lacanian psychoanalysis.<sup>7</sup> They have been grouped together under the label "French feminism," but because so grouped should not be understood to be in agreement with each other or even feminist. They are better described as anti-feminist in the same sense that writers like Derrida, Foucault, and Deleuze are anti-humanist, rejecting ideas of universality or essentialism that claim common identities for all "men" or all "women" or an autonomous identity for the individual self. As such, this concern with "woman" is different from that of traditional feminism, which has concentrated on the social and political condition of female individuals assumed to have not only autonomous individual identities but a shared identity as "women" as their basis for action.

I may seem to be leaving Nietzsche behind here, yet his writing has set the agenda for deconstruction or postmodernism, including the new French feminists, whether or not they agree with his "woman."<sup>8</sup> His themes and phrasing appear in the work and styles of the French theorists. The relationship that exists between Nietzsche and his French readers is intertextual, which indicates the textual reinscription of Nietzsche's work in the work of the writers

---

<sup>7</sup> Jardine 181.

<sup>8</sup> See Allan Megill's Prophets of Extremity for an extended discussion of the importance of Nietzsche to both modernism and postmodernism.

with whom I am here concerned -- Derrida, Deleuze, Foucault, Lacan, Irigaray, Cixous, Kofman, and Kristeva. This reinscription is more than a matter of quotation, direct reference, and common themes. It is more -- to use the word "text" according to its etymological roots in the Latin "texere" (to weave) -- that Nietzsche forms the warp upon which the later complex fabric of deconstruction and theoretical "feminism" has been woven, just as Nietzsche used the canons of Western culture as the warp of his own writings.

In the work of these French critics "woman" has become a prevalent metaphor -- politically and rhetorically since 1968 Roland Barthes' "metaphor without brakes." No longer just a question of the interpretation of Nietzsche, "woman" has acquired a life of her own. Alice Jardine, among others, notes how, whether in the work of Derrida, Lacan, Deleuze, Lyotard, Baudrillard, Michel Serres, in Foucault and Barthes as a "present absence," and in the writings of the French feminists,

"she" is created from the close exploration of semantic chains whose elements have changed textual as well as conceptual positions, at least in terms of valorization: from time to space, the same to other, paranoia to hysteria, city to labyrinth, mastery to non-mastery, truth to fiction.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> Jardine 38.

This "woman" is not biological but linguistic -- a question of language, and the role of the unconscious, the subject and the symbolic. Basic to Derrida's notion of writing, Foucault's discourse, and Deleuze's machines is their critique of the concept of the subject. In place of the subject is proposed the space of alterity within which the subject is configured. This space -- otherness, chaos, distance -- has always connoted the feminine in Western thought and thus the valorization of alterity, difference, and otherness involves "a putting into discourse of 'woman.'"<sup>10</sup> This discourse owes a significant debt to Nietzsche.

"Woman" thus becomes part of the twentieth century Western epistemological crisis over certainty and representation.<sup>11</sup> In general it is a question of loss of control and responses to this loss -- the "death" of the Cartesian subject, dialectics, and metaphysical Truth, and the loss or dislocation of a Western cultural identity based on what is white, European, and male.<sup>12</sup> Rather than shore up failing ideals, postmodern writers characteristically valorize this loss and affirm difference instead of

---

<sup>10</sup> Jardine 115.

<sup>11</sup> See Introduction, above.

<sup>12</sup> Jardine 68; Jardine, "Opaque Texts and Transparent Contexts: The Political Difference of Julia Kristeva" in The Poetics of Gender, ed. Carolyn G. Heilbrun and Nancy K.C. Miller (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986) 100.

identity. In doing so, they turned to Nietzsche's critique of truth, Freud's science of the unconscious, and Heidegger's destruction of presence as onto-theology, as texts already elaborating this loss of control.<sup>13</sup>

One feminist critic, Susan Bordo, has aptly noted that the dominant philosophical dualisms are overdetermined with respect to race, gender, and class such that the hierarchical opposition of reason/unreason may be coded many different ways, as, for example, male/female, white/African, or spiritual/material.<sup>14</sup> The second half of each opposition is defined as different and marginal. She says:

It is no accident, surely, that the beginnings of the current philosophical re-assessment of objectivism and foundationalism followed close on the heels of the public emergence, in the 1960s and 1970s, of those groups marginalized by the dominant metaphysics.<sup>15</sup>

Traditionally authority and credibility have been granted to those who can transcend everything that would mark them as different and therefore marginal, subjective, and unreliable.<sup>16</sup> The anti-humanism the postmodern writers espouse is based on a rejection of traditional movements of

<sup>13</sup> Jardine, Gynesis 71; Jardine, "Opaque Texts" 101.

<sup>14</sup> Susan Bordo, "Feminist Skepticism and the 'Maleness' of Philosophy," The Journal of Philosophy 85 (1988): 626.

<sup>15</sup> Bordo 628.

<sup>16</sup> Naomi Scheman, "Further Thoughts on a 'Theoretic of Heterogeneity,'" The Journal of Philosophy 85 (1988): 631.



liberation because of a conviction, in the wake of Nietzsche, that the western conceptions of the True, the Good, the Right, the Ethical, and the Natural are bound up with means of oppression -- and the complicity between oppression and Western ideas of the Same.<sup>17</sup>

I indicated above that the new French feminisms -- as anti or post-feminisms -- take as theoretical starting points the work of Derrida and Lacan. In order to follow what has become of "woman" in these new feminisms and offer a general survey and analysis of this work by writers who are still "readers of Nietzsche" (once removed), a further description of Derridean thought and the introduction of Lacanian theory is necessary. Although Lacan is a starting point, the French feminists and Derrida generally write against Lacan's phallogentrism. Alice Jardine describes this as a "battle" between Lacanian and Nietzschean philosophies.<sup>18</sup>

Lacan is known for his structuralist interpretation of Freud which defines the unconscious as "structured like a language" -- not only man speaks but in and by man language speaks.<sup>19</sup> Thus there is an affinity between Lacan and

---

<sup>17</sup> Jardine, "Opagues Texts" 99-100.

<sup>18</sup> Jardine, Gynesis 149.

<sup>19</sup> Spivak, "Translator's Preface," Of Grammatology by Jacques Derrida (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976) lxii.

Derrida in their concern for textuality. The relationship of Lacan and Derrida is complex and not relevant here except for the way in which "woman" has become (always been) involved. The difference appears in Lacan's notion of the privileged signifier.

When the child enters what Lacan calls the symbolic, it enters/acquires language. At the same time it has developed a new "linguistically imprisoned" concept of itself as a subject -- alienated from the old, from itself as it was before language with the mother. This "self" as a referent is lost, and unknowable -- the unconscious, which Lacan refers to as Other. It is beyond language, feminine, lost but ever pursued and desired. For Lacan, "signifiers are the symbols that relate the subject through the structure of desire to the unconscious." The "master" signifier of these signifiers is the phallus --

For the phallus is a signifier, a signifier whose function ... lifts the veil perhaps from the function it performed in the mysteries. For it is the signifier intended to designate as a whole the effects of the signified, in that the signifier conditions them by its presence as a signifier.<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> Jacques Lacan, Ecrits: A Selection (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1977) 285. According to Spivak, "Preface," lxv. "This is not the phallus as an actual organ, penis, or clitoris [but] the phallus as a signifier that can come to take the place of all signifiers signifying all desires for all absences" (Spivak, "Preface" lxv).

The phallus is the privileged signifier of that mark in which the role of the logos is joined with the advent of desire.<sup>21</sup>

The language the child enters into is governed by the symbolics of the phallus or "male subject as absolute metaphor" and the child's identity fixed according to a system of paternal names. This Law of the Father through the mediation of the Phallus denies a "place" to women except at second hand.<sup>22</sup> Thus for Lacan sexual difference is built into language, thought, and culture. Presence is masculine and absence or lack feminine, and the woman as mother is left behind in the narcissism of the "Pre-symbolic" once the child has created (or projected) his/her fiction of a self in/through language. The Law of the Father controls. Thus femininity cannot be expressed and the woman's identity is unstable.<sup>23</sup>

There is no Woman [La Femme], with a definite article for designating the universal. There is no Woman because -- I have already ventured the term, and why should I think twice about it -- with regard to her essence, she is not all.<sup>24</sup>

Woman is what escapes discourse -- Woman as Other, as man's unconscious. To attempt to speak outside of the Law of the Father would result in hysteria, or psychosis. Woman is

---

<sup>21</sup> Lacan 287.

<sup>22</sup> Nye 139-140.

<sup>23</sup> Nye 140-141.

<sup>24</sup> Lacan, Seminar XX: Encore 68 (cited in Jardine, Gynesis 164).

imprisoned ever more firmly is a system in which only men can speak -- Other in the sense in which she has always been other and silent.<sup>25</sup> Lacan makes "woman" Other in the sense of the Eternal Feminine.

Derrida argues that any privileged signifier is yet another metaphysical, transcendental longing for presence, similar to Heidegger's hope of a return to Being. Lacan is an example of that imposed patriarchal authority that feminism must subvert.<sup>26</sup> For Derrida signifier and signified -- or word and meaning -- are interchangeable, not merely arbitrarily related within a structural system. Nothing "is," there are only continuous sign chains of differences or traces to be deciphered, the sign a tool to be used provisionally. Meaning has no unique referent but "disseminates" itself endlessly.<sup>27</sup> There can be no transcendental signified (Being) or signifier (Phallus) that stabilizes the system, nothing behind or beyond language that serves as an ultimate referent or truth.

---

<sup>25</sup> In the words of Helene Cixous, "Here we encounter the inevitable man-with-rock, standing erect in his old Freudian realm, in the way that, to take the figure back to the point where linguistics is conceptualizing it "anew," Lacan preserves it in the sanctuary of the phallus ( $\emptyset$ ) "sheltered" from castration's lack! Their "symbolic" exists, it holds power -- we, the sowers of disorder, know it only too well" (Cixous, "Laugh of the Medusa," New French Feminisms 255).

<sup>26</sup> Nye 188.

<sup>27</sup> Spivak, "Preface" xvi. The affinity between Nietzsche and Derrida should also be clear here.

According to Derrida and the French feminist writers, a feminist reversal of the paternal power would simply reinstate phallogentrism in the form of an inverted sexism.<sup>28</sup> There is also the complicity of phallogentrism with logocentrism within/as metaphysics. With his concept of the Phallus as master signifier to our symbolic system of meaning Lacan has taken this implicit relationship and made it explicit. Metaphysics cannot be escaped or replaced, because new alternate truths still affirm the logical, metaphysical presence of truth as such. Thus for Derrida the necessary tactic is not only a reversal which valorizes the feminine, but a play or parody with symbolic structures and with truth, as Nietzsche's Woman played with the truth -- an affirmative deconstruction that displaces rather than confronts. Language is shown not to be structured around a transcendental signifier that provides a center for meaning but a kind of writing, a writing that "obliterates what it imprints and disperses what it says."<sup>29</sup> Writing is the trace of a permanent alterity:

---

<sup>28</sup> Derrida, Spurs 65: "And in truth, they too are men, those women feminists so derided by Nietzsche. Feminism is nothing but the operation of a woman who aspires to be like a man."

<sup>29</sup> Stefano Agnosti, "Introduction," Spurs 23.

Nietzsche puts "knowing" under erasure, Freud "the psyche," and Heidegger, explicitly, "Being" ... the name of this gesture effacing the presence of a thing and yet keeping it legible, in Derrida's lexicon is "writing," -- the gesture that both frees us from and guards us within, the metaphysical enclosure.<sup>30</sup>

Thus feminism in the form found in Derrida, Cixous, Irigaray, Kristeva, and Kofman goes beyond the attempt to define rights and equalities for women within the existing system to the question of the relationship of that system to existing notions of truth and the necessary subversion of metaphysical truth as that "space" where gender, culture, and power have been established for Western society in a particular way. They make explicit a kind of feminism that, as I have tried to argue, was implicit already in Nietzsche's work. Their "woman" is outside of all mastery and appropriation -- for "woman" meaning is multiple:

The question of the woman suspends the decidable opposition of true and non-true and inaugurates the epochal regime of quotation marks which is to be enforced for every concept belonging to the system of philosophical decidability.<sup>31</sup>

It would seem unlikely that such a system as Lacan's could find a place in feminist criticism, yet some feminists, particularly Julia Kristeva and Luce Irigaray (who was Lacan's student until she challenged his theories

---

<sup>30</sup> Spivak, "Preface" xli.

<sup>31</sup> Derrida, Spurs 107.

in The Speculum of the Other Woman) found in Lacan a powerful analysis of patriarchal relations.<sup>32</sup> In accepting this analysis, both argue that women can operate only as "other." Any new feminist position would have to be articulated from the more difficult position of otherness and decentralization. Lacan's theories are not accepted as absolute, but as a story of a particular kind -- the paternal logos -- that has ruled throughout Western civilization. It cannot be simply overturned, but can be subverted -- "mined" for gaps and inconsistencies.<sup>33</sup> One way they attempt to do this is through the valorization of the maternal. All four theorists assert in some form this maternal, the rediscovery of the mother -- the pre-Oedipal.<sup>34</sup> All recognize a certain valorization of woman as a means toward a destabilization of the dominant hierarchy in the "rehabilitation of the repressed." In claiming to expose the connections of gender to Western habits of thought, all of these theorists aim to subvert the traditional hierarchy from within or from its margins.

---

<sup>32</sup> Nye 141 (Canceling of Seminar in Nye 169 (73n)).

<sup>33</sup> Nye 190.

<sup>34</sup> Jonathan Culler, On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982) 173. See also Domna Stanton, "Difference on Trial: A Critique of the Maternal Metaphors in Cixous, Irigaray, and Kristeva," The Poetics of Gender 159.

Yet, if feminine practise is negative, undermining the stability of established structures, it must avoid a retreat into separatism. Julia Kristeva argues that women must both enter the masculine world and undermine patriarchal claims to authority and logical certainty.<sup>35</sup> A permanent analytical attitude -- "autocritique" -- must be maintained that prevents the feminine, the maternal, the "l'écriture au maternal" from ceasing to be a heuristic tool and becoming a new dominance.<sup>36</sup>

For Kristeva, the critical force of Freud and Lacan is their outline of the symbolic contract as one of sacrifice or castration, in which language constitutes meaning through a separation of the subject from a presumed state of nature and the introduction of a network of differences.<sup>37</sup> The question for women today, Kristeva argues, is "What can be our place in the symbolic contract?" -- the social contract.<sup>38</sup> Whether this is a matter of structure or a sociohistorical conjuncture is difficult to evaluate. She argues that "we can speak only about a structure observed in a sociohistorical context, which is that of Christian,

---

<sup>35</sup> Nye 148.

<sup>36</sup> Domna C. Stanton, "Difference on Trial" 173-174.

<sup>37</sup> Kristeva, "Women's Time," Critical Theory Since 1965, ed. Hazard Adams and Leroy Searle (Tallahassee: Florida State University Press, 1986) 477.

<sup>38</sup> Kristeva 477.



Western civilization and its lay ramifications."<sup>39</sup> She identifies two feminist positions that have operated so far, one a complicity with this contract to acquire what power it offers, the other variations on a utopian countersociety that posits a maternal myth of the archaic mother.<sup>40</sup>

Kristeva advocates a third attitude that understands the very dichotomy man/woman as metaphysics, a feminism that breaks free of a belief in Woman and "brings out the singularity of each woman."<sup>41</sup> She argues that the violence of the social contract needs to be relocated in the interior of every identity so that

the habitual and increasingly explicit attempt to fabricate a scapegoat victim as foundress of a society or countersociety may be replaced by the analysis of the potentialities of victim/executioner which characterize each identity, each subject, each sex.<sup>42</sup>

Unlike Irigaray and Cixous, Kristeva refuses to prescribe any particular relationship to the "feminine" other than

<sup>39</sup> Kristeva 477.

<sup>40</sup> Kristeva 477-481. If Kristeva herself calls for a maternal semiotics (Nye 142), the purpose is not the creation of a matriarchal society but an exploration of the "before" of language. If the Mother must be repressed, she remains as an abyss -- the dangerous Mother -- and possible threat. Further, many feminists would object that they do not fit either of these two categories, or find them troubling. Kristeva is quite explicit in her claims that "the assumption by women of executive, industrial, and cultural power has not, up to the present time, radically changed the nature of this power" (Kristeva 479).

<sup>41</sup> Kristeva 483.

<sup>42</sup> Kristeva 484.

women's need to both enter and undermine the masculine world.<sup>43</sup> Her work has focused on the politics of male sexuality and the examination of the operation of the "feminine" in patriarchal thought.<sup>44</sup>

Where Kristeva's primary texts are those of Freud and Lacan, the primary text of both Irigaray and Cixous is Derrida. Luce Irigaray is critical of Lacan.<sup>45</sup> Yet he and Derrida, particularly Derrida's Spurs, are indirectly present in her texts.<sup>46</sup> Her writing is also a question of style -- fluid, figural, parodic, allusive -- a deconstructive play with words and syntax. Like Derrida (and Nietzsche), Irigaray in Speculum traced the systematic exclusion of the feminine in the core texts of Western thought from Plato on, the "prior logic" that has made the masculine the presence against which all else is measured and that has established the function of woman as that of either absence or mirror.<sup>47</sup> Her aim is to show the feminine as a positive, rather than merely negative, presence -- the feminine as a value in its own right "beyond the looking glass." She creates new metaphors based on female sexual

---

<sup>43</sup> Jardine, "Opaque Texts" 110.

<sup>44</sup> Jardine, "Opaque Texts" 113.

<sup>45</sup> Nye 148.

<sup>46</sup> Carolyn Burke, "Irigaray Through the Looking Glass," Feminist Studies 7/2 (1981): 293.

<sup>47</sup> Nye 151; Culler 58.

organs and autoeroticism in order to reappropriate what psychoanalytic theory has rejected.<sup>48</sup> The feminine "object" is neither inert nor stable, but can "speak for itself." Yet this should not be taken as, or reduced to, a kind of biological essentialism. It remains a "Derridean" deconstructive move, privileging the subordinate side of the male/female imaginary. If the feminine functions as the "outside" of discourse, the continuum out of which distinctions are carved, Irigaray would claim that they are not carved without remainder or reminder.<sup>49</sup> In This Sex Which Is Not One Irigaray writes that

repeating/interpreting the way in which, within discourse, the feminine finds itself defined as lack, deficiency, or as imitation and negative image of the subject, they [women] should signify that with respect to this logic a disruptive excess is possible on the feminine side.<sup>50</sup>

Helene Cixous also urges a rediscovery of the female body.<sup>51</sup> This rediscovery takes the form of an l'écriture féminine, the name Cixous gives to Derrida's notion of

---

<sup>48</sup> Nye 151-153. See Irigaray's This Sex Which is Not One, trans. Catherine Porter (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985).

<sup>49</sup> Margaret Whitford, "Luce Irigaray's Critique of Rationality," in Feminist Perspectives in Philosophy, ed. Morwenna Griffiths and Margaret Whitford (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988) 114.

<sup>50</sup> Irigaray, This Sex 78.

<sup>51</sup> Nye 198.

writing as "feminine operation"<sup>52</sup> Cixous is also a reader of Bataille. Her l'écriture feminine is associated with notions of excess -- the "reprise of a female Dionysian experience, the 'way out' of the patriarchy and the living of joyful lives at the margin of excess."<sup>53</sup> Women have a privileged relation to writing because they have an acceptance of (m)otherness and a "bisexuality" that men lack.<sup>54</sup> She calls for women to "write their bodies," and seize the opportunity to speak and to transform phallocentrism, to "write the other history."<sup>55</sup> For Cixous, women are already postmodern, and their prototype is Molly Bloom:

We have no womanly reason to pledge allegiance to the negative. The feminine (as the poets suspected) affirms: "... And yes," says Molly, carrying Ulysses off beyond any book and toward the new writing; "I said yes, I will Yes."<sup>56</sup>

Cixous moves away from Irigaray in arguing for separatism -- a feminist withdrawal from male dominated publishing, academics, and politics rather than

---

<sup>52</sup> Derrida, Spurs 57.

<sup>53</sup> Robert Con Davis, "Woman as Oppositional Reader: Cixous on Discourse," Papers on Language and Literature 24 (1988): 272.

<sup>54</sup> Culler 173.

<sup>55</sup> Cixous, "Sorties" 96. Cixous claims that "it is impossible to define a feminine practice of writing," in "Laugh of Medusa" in New French Feminisms 253.

<sup>56</sup> Cixous, "Laugh" 255.

compromise.<sup>57</sup> Cixous herself rejects criticisms of idealism or mysticism, yet they are often made.<sup>58</sup> Julia Kristeva rejects this type of thought as a utopian retreat into private language and the abdication of power.<sup>59</sup> Cixous moves away from Derrida as well in arguing that women through their bodies have a privileged access to writing.

Derrida is also a primary text for Sarah Kofman, who is described as an "orthodox Derridean" (if there is such a thing).<sup>60</sup> Kofman is more openly anti-feminist, arguing that feminism is a phallocentrism "no matter what the sex of its speaker." She is interested, like Derrida, in "woman" and her attributes -- "woman" as the undecidable oscillation that subverts metaphysical claims to know.<sup>61</sup> She agrees with Derrida about Nietzsche and the affirmative, Dionysian woman. Kofman finds this woman in "Baubo," who signifies affirmation as the female double of Dionysus. Baubo, a Greek fertility figure that is associated with female genitalia and the Goddess Demeter, represents fecundity, protean life,

---

<sup>57</sup> Spivak, "Displacement" 204.

<sup>58</sup> For instance, that Cixous is guilty of an inverted humanism (Spivak, "Displacement" 207).

<sup>59</sup> Nye 204; Nye 207.

<sup>60</sup> Jardine, Gynesis 199.

<sup>61</sup> Jardine, Gynesis 199.

and the Eternal Return -- one who knows that despite death life can come back indefinitely.<sup>62</sup>

Such a brief survey is bound to be unsatisfying to anyone intrigued by such arguments. It does, however, set out a general outline of the way in which Nietzsche's use of a metaphor has become part of a certain theoretical discourse. There remain a few reservations on which to remark. Helene Cixous argues that "Woman is obviously not that woman Nietzsche dreamed of who gives only in order to."<sup>63</sup> Her woman gives without return. However, this seems to ignore the Nietzschean move to place "woman" outside of appropriation and make the "gift" undecidable.

This is less significant than a more general concern, not directed at Nietzsche in particular (but in his direction) by Luce Irigaray:

---

<sup>62</sup> Sarah Kofman, "Baubo: Theological Perversion and Fetishism," from *Nietzsche et la scene philosophique* (1979) in *Nietzsche's New Seas* ed. Michael Gillespie and Tracy Strong (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988) 197-198. The reference to Baubo comes from *The Gay Science*: "Perhaps truth is a woman who has reasons for not letting us see her reasons? Perhaps her name is -- to speak Greek -- Baubo?" (Nietzsche's Preface to *The Gay Science* §4).

<sup>63</sup> Cixous, "Laugh" 259.

Yet, ever more hemmed in, cathected by hopes, how could she articulate any sound from beneath this cheap chivalric finery? How find a voice, make a choice strong enough, subtle enough to cut through those layers of ornamental style, that decorative sepulcher, where even her breath is lost. She has yet to feel the need to get free of fabric, reveal her nakedness, her destitution in language, explode in the face of them all, words too. For the imperious need for her shame, her chastity -- duly fitted out with the belt of discourse --, of her decent modesty, continues to be asserted by every man.<sup>64</sup>

This points to a distrust of a discourse of "woman" conducted by men. Alice Jardine also argues that "woman" in the hands of male writers and theorists indicates the possibility of a certain male paranoia, even a new "ruse of reason" that consists of a male combatting or socializing of the crisis of monotheism and reintegrating the unnameable into the Western symbolic system before it collapses.<sup>65</sup>

Some feminists argue that theories of deconstruction and difference have a value in exposing a male logic, yet remain a matter of men's self-criticism. I would here repeat my own claim from above that the feminist reader can use Nietzsche's "woman" as a powerful deconstructive lever. The writers I have just discussed do use "woman" this way. In her many examinations of "deconstruction" Gayatri Spivak argues that this is not just another instance of masculine use of woman as object, but the means to displace masculine

---

<sup>64</sup> Irigaray, Speculum 143.

<sup>65</sup> Jardine, Gynesis 99-102.

discourse itself, along with a new willingness on the part of some male philosophers and critics to question the hegemony of the male "we."<sup>66</sup>

Such arguments also appear to some feminists to abandon women's historical experience and oppression for ideology and theory, yet it is more a matter of the exploration of the "other" side of this oppression. Others, notably Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, argue that this emphasis on theories of writing as feminine ignores a history of writing by women that goes back to Emily Dickinson, Virginia Woolf, and Gertrude Stein.<sup>67</sup> There has always been tension between theory and practise. In this case they are not incompatible. They are incompatible if the criticism assumes that the new French Feminisms are making apriori arguments or claims about the essence of language or its immutable structure.<sup>68</sup> They are not. The force of Nietzsche's argument, as it has been extended in the work of Derrida and the new feminisms, is the uncovering of a genealogy -- the historical existence of a system of hierarchical oppositions specific to Western culture within which the masculine/feminine are embedded. If something is historical and specific to a particular

---

<sup>66</sup> Spivak, "Displacement" 207.

<sup>67</sup> Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, "Sexual Linguistics: Gender, Language, Sexuality," New Literary History 16 (1985): 516.

<sup>68</sup> Gilbert and Gubar 519.



perspective it can be changed, but not easily, particularly not when it has been in full swing for a few thousands of years. Is Western discourse "caught within the metaphysical or phallogocentric limit?"<sup>69</sup> The writers who appear here claim that it is. Few would disagree, whether empirically or theoretically oriented, that there are persistent patterns in which active/passive has also been coded male/female and in which the power of creating and control of the word (God/Father/Author/Possessor/Begetter) has been appropriated by men. But it is the question of appropriation that is being asked.

---

<sup>69</sup> Spivak, "Displacement" 173.

## CONCLUSION

Nietzsche can be accused of misogyny only at the expense of disregarding the function of "woman" as a primary metaphor that is fundamental to Nietzsche's texts. "Woman" is the disruptive figure that displaces not only metaphysical truth but the ancient basis for Western stereotypes, within which Nietzsche is valorizing "woman" in an attempt to revalue the values of western culture. Reading this affirmative woman in Nietzsche's texts requires paying attention to the way in which Nietzsche constantly parodies the form in which these truths are represented. As I have already argued, this parody is pronounced in the name of woman.

Nietzsche "ventured" the claim that he "knew" women as part of his Dionysian dowry.<sup>1</sup> The "first psychologist of the eternal feminine" made this claim because he was able to operate multiple perspectives in his writing. Not only is this "most multifarious art of style" the early model for postmodern texts that attempt to erase themselves as they go rather than establish new Truths, but the source of most of the confusion over what Nietzsche wrote about women. Most of Nietzsche's more notorious remarks about women, as I argue

---

<sup>1</sup> Nietzsche, Ecce Homo 266.

above, are to be found among his analysis of the reactive perspective, a perspective in which "woman" as the Eternal Feminine either collaborates with the idealism of men -- the idealization of woman as such, truth as such -- or herself identifies with such ideals. Also, Nietzsche's arguments against feminism depend on his insistence that the concept of equality is a false ideal that has so far served to level society and make it average and that has created binding conceptions of how individuals must function. In this sense a feminism that makes claims for "woman as such" is not progressive but regressive. Nietzsche's remarks on woman question all feminisms and anti-feminisms -- any attempt to legislate for others instead of oneself.

"Woman" exceeds familiar stereotypes as a strategy that disrupts not only rationality but gender differences and hierarchies -- the subversive body in Nietzsche's texts -- that is not reduced to any particular image or totality, but affirms multiple possibilities, an affirmative strategy that women can use. Once this strategy of reading "woman" acquired an interpretive force in the texts of postmodern thought such as those by Derrida, Foucault, and Deleuze, "woman" became a prevalent metaphor for the valorization of alterity, otherness, and difference in the subversion of the opposition masculinity/femininity as no longer a given but a cultural construction. The women writers associated with the

label "French feminism" take up these claims, making explicit what was implicit in Nietzsche's work.

Thus Nietzsche's use of this metaphor of "woman" against traditional conceptions has become part of postmodern theoretical discourse based on claims for the historical existence of a system of hierarchical oppositions specific to Western culture and the necessary subversion of metaphysical truth as that "space" where gender, culture, and power have been established for Western society in a particular way and within which the masculine/feminine are embedded. This is not a denial of gender difference but its deconstruction -- gender is relative to particular constructions in specified contexts, no longer the absolute distinction between male/female (or other invidious oppositions) that has been used to justify different treatment and enforce normative rules. It also claims that political effectiveness need not be based on sameness as the ground for action -- a sameness that denies the diversity of individuals. Nietzsche's Woman is not the traditional Other to man and culture that is hidden, silent, and marginal but, paradoxically, figures the use of this otherness to disrupt the pair Same/Other without reducing it to either side. Nietzsche's idea of difference requires thinking it in terms that do not duplicate the old oppositions.

## WORKS CITED

- Allison, David B., ed. The New Nietzsche. New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1977.
- Bachofen, J.J. Myth, Religion, and Mother Right. Trans. Ralph Manheim. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967.
- Bataille, Georges. "On Nietzsche: The Will to Chance." October 36 (1986): 46-58
- Blondel, Eric. "Nietzsche's Style of Affirmation: The Metaphors of Genealogy." Nietzsche as Affirmative Thinker. Ed. Yirmiyahu Yovel. Dordrecht/Boston/Lancaster: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1986. 132-146.
- Bordo, Susan. "Feminist Skepticism and the 'Maleness' of Philosophy." The Journal of Philosophy 85 (1988): 619-629.
- Burke, Carolyn. "Irigaray Through the Looking Glass." Feminist Studies 7/2 (1981): 288-306.
- Caputo, J.D. "Three Transgressions: Nietzsche, Heidegger, Derrida." Research in Phenomenology 15 (1985): 61-78.
- Culler, Jonathan. On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982.
- Davis, Robert Con. "Woman as Oppositional Reader: Cixous on Discourse." Papers on Language and Literature 24 (1988): 265-282.
- Del Caro, Adrian. "Symbolizing Philosophy: Ariadne and the Labyrinth." Nietzsche-Studien 17 (1988): 125-157.
- Deleuze, Giles. Nietzsche and Philosophy. Trans. Hugh Tomlinson. New York: Columbia University Press, 1983.
- Derrida, Jacques. Spurs. Trans. Barbara Harlow. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979.

- . "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy." Margins. Trans. Alan Bass. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982.
- Dreyfus, Hubert L. and Paul Rabinow. Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982.
- Ellenberger, Henri F. The Discovery of the Unconscious. New York: Basic Books, 1970.
- Evans, Richard. The Feminist Movement in Germany 1894-1933. London and Beverly Hills: SAGE Publications, 1976.
- Foucault, Michel. "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History." Foucault Reader. Ed. Paul Rabinow. New York: Pantheon Books, 1984.
- Gilbert, Sandra M. and Susan Gubar. "Sexual Linguistics: Gender, Language, Sexuality." New Literary History 16 (1985): 515- 544.
- Gillespie, Michael and Tracy Strong, eds. Nietzsche's New Seas. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988.
- Gilman, Sander L., Carole Blair, and David J. Parent, eds. Friedrich Nietzsche on Rhetoric and Language. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Griffiths, Morwenna and Margaret Whitford, eds. Feminist Perspectives in Philosophy. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988.
- Guzzoni, Alfredo, ed. 90 Jahre Philosophische Nietzsche Rezeption. Königstein/Ts: Hain, 1979.
- Hamilton, Edith. Mythology. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1942.
- Hatab, Lawrence. "Nietzsche on Woman." Southern Journal of Philosophy 19 (1981): 333-346.
- Heidegger, Martin. Nietzsche: The Will to Power as Art (Vol. 1) Trans. David Farrell Krell. New York: Harper and Row, 1979.
- . Nietzsche: Eternal Recreance of the Same, (Vol. 2). Trans. David Farrell Krell. Cambridge: Harper and Row, 1984.

- . Nietzsche: Will to Power as Knowledge and as Metaphysics (Vol. 3). Trans. Joan Stambaugh, David Farrell Krell, Frank Capuzzi. New York: Harper and Row, 1987.
- . Nietzsche: Nihilism (Vol. 4). Trans. Frank Capuzzi. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987.
- Lawrence Hinman. "Nietzsche, Metaphor and Truth." Philosophy and Phenomenological Research 43 (1982): 179-200.
- Holborn, Hajo. A History of Modern Germany: 1840-1945. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969.
- Hollier, Denis. Against Architecture: The Writings of Georges Bataille. Trans. Betsy Wing. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1989.
- Hollingdale, J. Nietzsche. London: ARK, 1985.
- Irigaray, Luce. Speculum of the Other Woman. Trans. Gillian C. Gill. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985.
- . This Sex Which is Not One. Trans. Catherine Porter. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985.
- Jardine, Alice. Gynesis: Configurations of Woman and Modernity. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985.
- . "Opaque Texts and Transparent Contexts: The Political Difference of Julia Kristeva." The Poetics of Gender. Ed. Carolyn G. Heilbrun and Nancy K. Miller. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986.
- Jaspers, Karl. Nietzsche. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1965.
- Löwith, Karl. From Hegel to Nietzsche. Garden City: Anchor Books, 1967.
- Kaufmann, Walter. Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974.
- Kennedy, Ellen. "Nietzsche: Women as Untermensch." Women in Western Political Philosophy. Ed. Ellen Kennedy. New York: St. Martins Press, 1987. 179-201.
- Kittay, Eva Feder. "Woman as Metaphor." Hypatia 3/2 (Summer, 1988): 63-86.

- Krell, David Farrell and David Wood, eds. Exceedingly Nietzsche. New York: Routledge, 1988.
- Krell, David Farrell. Postponements: Women, Sensuality, and Death in Nietzsche. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986.
- . "Introduction." Basic Writings. By Heidegger. New York: Harper and Row, 1977.
- . "A Hermeneutics of Discretion." Research in Phenomenology 15 (1985): 1-27.
- Kristeva, Julia. "Women's Time." Critical Theory Since 1965. Ed. Hazard Adams and Leroy Searle. Tallahassee: Florida State University Press, 1986.
- Krupnick, Mark, ed. Displacement: Derrida and After. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983.
- Lacan, Jacques. Ecrits: A Selection. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1977.
- Lloyd, Genevieve. "Texts, Metaphors and the Pretensions of Philosophy." Philosophy and Literary Theory 69 (1986): 87-102.
- Lyotard, Jean-Francois. The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge. Trans. Geof Bennington and Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989.
- Marks, Elaine and Isabelle de Courtivron ed. New French Feminisms. New York: Schocken Books, 1981.
- Megill, Allan. Prophets of Extremity: Nietzsche, Heidegger, Foucault, and Derrida. Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1985.
- Miller, Nancy, ed. The Poetics of Gender. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986.
- Nehamas, Alexander. Life as Literature. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. Beyond Good and Evil. Trans. Walter Kaufmann. New York: Vintage books, 1966.
- . The Gay Science. Trans. Walter Kaufmann. New York: Random House, 1974.



- . Daybreak. Trans. R. J. Hollingdale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.
- . Twilight of the Idols/The Antichrist. Trans. R.J. Hollingdale. New York: Penguin, 1968.
- . On the Genealogy of Morals/Ecce Homo. Trans. Walter Kaufmann. Canada: Random House, 1969.
- . The Will to Power. Trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale. New York: Vintage, 1968.
- . Thus Spoke Zarathustra. Trans. Walter Kaufmann. New York: Penguin, 1978.
- . Human All Too Human. Trans. R. J. Hollingdale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- Nye, Andrea. "The Hidden Host: Irigary and Diotima at Plato's Symposium." Hypatia 3 (Winter, 1989): 45-61.
- . Feminist Theory and the Philosophies of Man. London and New York: Croom Helm, 1988.
- O'Hara, Daniel, ed. Why Nietzsche Now?. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985.
- Oliver, Kelly. "Woman as Truth in Nietzsche's Writing." Social Theory and Practise 10 (1984): 185-200.
- . "Nietzsche's Woman: The Poststructuralist Attempt to Do Away with Women." Radical Philosophy 48 (1988): 25-29.
- Ormiston, Gayle. "Traces of Derrida: Nietzsche's Image of Woman." Philosophy Today 28 (Summer 1984): 149-161.
- Rajchman, John. Michel Foucault: The Freedom of Philosophy. New York: Columbia University Press, 1985.
- Reinhardt, Karl. "Nietzsche's Lament of Ariadne." Interpretation 6/3 (October, 1977): 204-224.
- Scheman, Naomi. "Further Thoughts on a 'Theoretic of Heterogeneity,'" The Journal of Philosophy 85 (1988): 630-631.
- Schmidt, Heinrich. Philosophisches Wörterbuch. Leipzig: Alfred Kröner Verlag, 1934.

- Schrift, Alan D. "Language, Metaphor, Rhetoric: Nietzsche's Deconstruction of Epistemology." Journal of the History of Philosophy 23 (1985): 371-396.
- . "Reading Derrida Reading Heidegger Reading Nietzsche." Research in Phenomenology 14 (1984): 87-119.
- Spivak, Gayatri. "French Feminism in an International Frame." Yale French Studies 62 (1981): 154-184.
- . "Translator's Preface." Of Grammatology. By Jacques Derrida. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976.
- Strong, Tracy. Friedrich Nietzsche and the Politics of Transfiguration. London: University of California Press Ltd, 1988.
- Thomas, R. Hinton. Nietzsche in German Politics and Society 1890-1918. La Salle: Open Court, 1983.